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1834.



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PLEASANT DREAMS:

A FARCE.

BY

CHARLES DANCE,

AUTHOR OF

"A MATCH IN THE DARK;" "KILL OR CURE;" "HE'S NOT A-MISS;" "THE WATER PARTY;" "THE BEULAH SPA;" &c., &c.

FIRST PRODUCED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN,

SATURDAY, MAY 24th, 1834.

LONDON:

JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA STREET,

COVENT GARDEN,

(Agent to the Dramatic Authors' Society.)

1834.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Porridge	Mr. BARTLEY.
Peter (*his Son*)	Mr. MEADOWS.
Oliver Sanguine	Mr. LISTON.
Mr. Biggs	Mr. BLANCHARD.
Boots	Mr. HUGHES.
Waiter	Mr. W. H. PAYNE.
Mrs. Porridge	Mrs. C. JONES.
Sally	Mrs. FITZWILLIAM.

Harjette & Savill, Printers, 107, St. Martin's Lane.



TO

MR. LISTON,

(FOR WHOM IT WAS EXPRESSLY WRITTEN,)

THIS LITTLE FARCE

IS

DEDICATED,

BY HIS SINCERE FRIEND,

CHARLES DANCE.





SAL. La! is it?—jump down, then; or, stay, (*jumping down,*) take mine, you'll find that quite comfortable.

PET. (*Jumping down and coming forward with her.*) That's not what I mean—my father says I shall never marry you.

SAL. What right has he to say any such thing, I should like to know?

PET. Too much right, unfortunately; I arn't one-and-twenty yet.

SAL. You wouldn't have refused him if he had asked your leave when he was married, I'll be bound.

PET. I couldn't, you know, Sally—I wasn't born.

SAL. And if you had been, you wouldn't have objected.

PET. No, that I wouldn't; but I'm afraid father will send you away from our inn.

SAL. He shan't do any such thing!

PET. Ah! Sally, he can oblige you to go.

SAL. He can oblige me a great deal more by letting me stay and marry you!

PET. He never will.

SAL. Then I'll tell you what we'll do. (*Taking his hand.*) Let us make the promise, and wait till he's dead, and then be married.

PET. (*Withdrawing his hand.*) Sally! Sally! I never was vexed with you before. My father is a little hard upon me about this business, it's true, but he has been a good father to me, and I can't bear to hear you, of all people in the world, talk about wishing him to die!

SAL. *I* wish *your* father to die? Now, Mr. Peter—Peter, I mean—did I ever say such a word? I wish I may die if I wouldn't rather bite the top of my middle finger off, silver

thimble and all!—(*Approaching him affectionately.*)—And you *know* who gave me the thimble, Peter.

PET. There—there—it's all forgotten; and now, Sally, one kiss!

SAL. You foolish fellow, why didn't you ask for it sooner? —there's somebody coming.

(*Exit running, followed by* PET., L. 1st E.)

(MR. BIGGS *gets over the stile and advances, as if to look out for the town.*)

BIGGS. Cowes—Cowes—where are you, Cowes? Oh! there you are, at last! (*Calling.*) Oliver!—nephew!—come on, here's Cowes just below us. (*Speaking.*) Upon my life these walking tours may be very conducive to health, but they're monstrously fatiguing! (*Calling.*) Oliver, I say! — Oliver Sanguine! (*Speaking.*) No answer—I wouldn't mind wagering sixpence that he has gone to sleep again. (*Calling louder.*) Oliver!—nephew!—sleeper!—dreamer! (*still louder,*) Oliver!

(SANGUINE *appears behind the stile; he stretches himself and gives a loud yawn.*)

SAN. Why, uncle Biggs, what an amazingly loud voice you have for such a little man. (*Gets partly over the stile and sits on the top.*)

BIGGS. Egad! one had need have a loud voice to wake you. What, in the world, did you go to sleep again for?

SAN. (*Coming forward.*) If you had such dreams as I have, you would be glad to go to sleep too. I never close my eyes without immediately seeming to become a king—or a Field Marshal—or a Government Contractor—or some other great and rich man!

BIGGS. And you never open them but to see yourself the same poor devil that you were before! Your best chance is your old godfather's promise to leave you something.

SAN. My old godfather's promise, indeed! Come, I like that vastly! Here's a man who wont believe in dreams, and yet offers to trust a godfather's promise of a legacy.

BIGGS. Oliver! Oliver! I wish I could persuade you—

SAN. (*Interrupting.*) Uncle! uncle! I can be persuaded of nothing that will shake my confidence in signs, and sounds, and dreams. Didn't the ancients believe in them?

BIGGS. More fools they!

SAN. Were they? Didn't Julius Cæsar's wife dream that he would be murdered if he went to the Senate-house?

BIGGS. Yes; but Julius Cæsar had too much sense to attend to her.

SAN. And so got stabbed for his pains!

BIGGS. So he did; I forgot—but that's only one instance.

SAN. I could give you a hundred.

BIGGS. Pray don't, for I want some dinner.

SAN. Well, then, to come to more modern times. Do you remember about Whittington?

BIGGS. And his cat?

SAN. And the bells!

BIGGS. Bah! trash out of a child's story book!

SAN. It's as true as you stand there. Wasn't he going away from London, the same poor miserable boy that he came into it, and wouldn't he have gone and grown up from a poor miserable boy into a poor miserable man, if he hadn't been recalled by the encouraging sound of the merry London bells? Didn't he pause and listen? and, directed by his good genius, didn't he think he heard them say—(*Singing,*)

"Turn again, Whittington,
Turn again, Whittington,
Whittington shall be the Lord Mayor of London,
Whittington shall be Mayor of London Town!"

I say, didn't he *think* he heard them say so? because you don't suppose that the bells actually did say the words, "Turn again, Whittington."

BIGGS. And what of all this?

SAN. What?—everything! He *did* turn, and he *was* Lord Mayor of London!

BIGGS. I wish I was one of the Aldermen of London, for then I should, perhaps, be nearer something to eat.

SAN. To come to our own times—haven't you heard of many people who have dreamt of particular numbers in the lottery?

BIGGS. Yes; a hundred.

SAN. And do you happen to remember what they came up?

BIGGS. Blanks—blanks, every one!

SAN. Then there must have been some mistake.

BIGGS. There was nothing else.

SAN. I dreamt of a number myself once.

BIGGS. And you got a prize, of course?

SAN. Allow me to explain how it was. I dreamt I saw a pair of stockings hanging out to dry—

BIGGS. Well?

SAN. And the next morning, delighted with the information thus mysteriously conveyed to me, I rushed to the Lottery office, and bought number forty-four.

BIGGS. Why forty-four?

SAN. Because it's the number which a pair of stockings most resembles.

BIGGS. Oh! and your ticket was drawn—

SAN. Unluckily a blank!

BIGGS. Of course!

SAN. Stay; I can account for it. In the hurry of the moment I had overlooked the circumstance, that the stockings I dreamt of were hanging from the feet, and, therefore, that I ought to have bought number seventy-seven.

BIGGS. And number seventy-seven was a prize, no doubt?

SANG. I couldn't muster courage to inquire.

BIGGS. I never heard a case more clearly proved. Now really, Oliver, that business alone ought to have cured you of your folly.

SAN. Folly!—to shew you the confidence I have in my late dreams, I'll make a bargain with you. Let us continue our walking tour for one week longer, and if, in the course of that time, no good fortune happens to me, I'll give up and be guided by you for the future.

BIGGS. Agreed! with all my heart! Then one week puts an end to the wanderings of my feet, and the wanderings of your head.

SAN. Don't be too sure of that, for I feel satisfied—

BIGGS. (*Interrupting.*) I wish *I* did; I only feel hungry—so come along down the hill, and we'll see what we can get to eat at Cowes.

SAN. Have with you, uncle,—(*Chimes heard as coming from the town,*)—and hark!

BIGGS. Hark to what?

SAN. The bells—listen—fortunate coincidence!—just as I was talking of them; listen, I say! (*Singing in imitation of the bells.*) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. (*Bells cease—Going on one knee.*) Genius of Whittington!

BIGGS. Genius of folly. (*Going.*)

SAN. Folly has no genius. Genius of Whittington, hear me! May my fortunes from this moment——

BIGGS. (*Interrupting.*) Get up.

SAN. (*To uncle, and rising.*) They *shall* get up—(*As invoking Genius.*)—and henceforth make me prosperous as I am.

BIGGS. (*Calling impatiently.*) Sanguine!

SAN. I *am* sanguine; and you shall see that it is with reason. Now, Nunky, come on. (*Bells repeated—Singing.*) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8—1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

(*Exit, singing, accompanied by* BIGGS.)

SCENE II.

Close Scene—Room or passage in the Crown Inn. Bells ring.

Enter PORRIDGE, *calling.*

POR. Waiter! waiter!—a pretty inn this is for attention to-day. I wonder what chance the customers stand, when the landlord himself bawls and rings, and rings and bawls for ten minutes together, without getting any answer. (*Calling.*) Here, waiter, waiter! (*Speaking.*) I shall be in a rage presently; and then I recommend them all to look out for squalls. *Shall be* in a rage, did I say? I *am* in a rage; I went to bed in a rage; slept in a rage; woke in a rage; got up in a rage; went to bathe in a rage; plunged in; and made the sea hiss all around me—to think that that son—that Peter of mine—should dare to talk to me of marrying my own chambermaid, when by years of slavery, by honest

industry, and the most moderate over-charges, I have made a fortune for him, with which he might look to marry into a titled family; aye, and give 'em quantity for quality as long as they pleased. If he were of age, he might marry her and starve. Luckily, however, he is not; and he shall feel what it is to have a fond father to protect him. If he mentions the subject again, I'll break his head. (*Calling.*) Waiter! waiter!

Enter BOOTS, L. 1 E.

BOOTS. Did you call, sir?

POR. Did I call, sir? I've done nothing else this ten minutes. Where's John?

BOOTS. He's gone out, sir—to look for Mr. Peter—you sent him.

POR. So I did; I forgot. Where's Thomas?

BOOTS. He's gone out, sir, to look for Mr. Peter—you sent him.

POR. So I did; I forgot. Where have you been?

BOOTS. I've been out, sir—to look for Mr. Peter—you sent me.

POR. So I did; I forgot. Have you found him?

BOOTS. No, sir.

POR. Then you're a fool.

BOOTS. Yes, sir.

POR. Where's your mistress?

BOOTS. In the bar, sir.

POR. Go and tell her—no; go out again, and—no; run up stairs into the garret, and see—no; go about your business—stay; go and keep watch at the back door, and tell me if any body comes in that way.

BOOTS. Yes, sir. (*Exit*, R. 1 E.)

POR. I can't find that baggage Sally anywhere; and I half suspect that Peter is gone out with her. I'll keep watch at the front door myself; and if I find my suspicions justified, I'll send her off at a moment's notice, and lock Peter up in the cellar—he shall know what it is to have an affectionate father. (*Exit*, L. 1 E.)

SCENE III.

Entrance hall of the Crown Inn—staircase on right, leading to upper rooms—glass doors in centre—the bar on left—the sashes of the bar are up.

MRS. PORRIDGE *discovered seated*, L. *2nd* E., *at a table within the bar, with her side to the audience, making out bills.* PORRIDGE *is seen through the glass doors, standing at the outer door with his back to the audience.*

MRS. P. Four pound ten—12, 15, 17—five pounds—five pound—1, 2, 8, 11, 14—five pound, fourteen shillings—Well done, No. 3; that's pretty well for two people since the middle of yesterday—Oh, here's a horrid mistake—No. 6 went away by the packet this morning, and I've left a bottle of wine out of his bill—I can't afford to lose it; so down it must go to No. 3. (*Writing.*) "Sherry, six shillings"—that makes their bill just £6.—I like even money. Why what have I been about?—No. 6 owed for a bottle of soda water besides. Well, I can't help it, No. 3 must pay for that too—no, he shan't—never mind—I hate altering people's bills for trifles—I'll forgive him that—

POR. Did any one come in while you were there?

(BOOTS *looks at* PETER, *who puts his finger on his lip.*)

POR. Answer me—did any living thing pass you and enter the house?

MRS. P. (*To* BOOTS.) Answer your Master—don't be afraid.

POR. (*To* MRS. P.) Don't you interfere.

MRS. P. I will, Mr. P.

BOOTS. Yes, sir.

POR. I thought so—who was it?

(BOOTS *looks at* PETER, *who holds his fist up to him.*)

BOOTS. The cat, sir.

POR. You're a fool—nothing else?

BOOTS. Nothing else, sir.

POR. Go away; and if I find you've told me a lie, I'll give you a cat that you shall remember for a week.

BOOTS. Thank you, sir. (*Exit*, R. 1 E.)

POR. (*Looking first at* PETER, *then at* SALLY, *and then at his wife.*) Look you—all of you—there's some mystery here; and I suspect I'm being deceived, though I can't at present tell by whom.

MRS. P. You needn't look at me, Mr. P.

POR. I'm not so sure of that, Mrs. P.; you may go back to the bar, and go on with your accounts.

MRS. P. Thank you. (*Moves a little way only.*)

POR. Peter, put on your hat, go out at that door, and shut it after you.

PET. Yes, father.

POR. Mrs. P., did you hear what I said?

(*Goes to her; takes her arm, and shews her towards the bar.*)

PET. (*Aside to* SAL.) I told you he'd speak to you; now be cautious.

SAL. (*Aside to him.*) I shan't be any such thing; I've done nothing wrong, and I don't care a brass farthing for anybody!

POR. (*Turning.*) Peter!

PET. Going, father. (*Takes his hat and goes out,* C. D.)

(MRS. POR. *resumes her seat and pretends to work, but watches and listens.*)

POR. Come here, Sally.

SAL. Here I am, sir.

POR. You needn't be afraid.

SAL. Of course not, sir; what should I be afraid of?

POR. (*Angrily.*) Of me!

SAL. Why?

POR. My son has made love to you.

SAL. Yes, bless his heart; and I'm very much obliged to him for it.

POR. You must give him up.

SAL. That I wont!

POR. You wont?

SAL. No, certainly not—why should I?

POR. I am *his* father, and *your* master; and I ask you—

SAL. I should be very happy to do anything to oblige you, sir; but he asked me first.

POR. (*Aside.*) Confound it! what am I to do with her? (*Aloud.*) Look here—promise me never to marry him, and I'll take your simple word for it, and give you twenty pounds.

SAL. Fiddle-de-dee!—you and your twenty pounds! I wouldn't break my word to him for twenty *hundred* pounds!

POR. Very well, ma'am; very well—then I must shew my authority. In the first place, you pack up your things and leave my house this very day!

SAL. What, leave your house for nothing at all; and be disgraced as if I had done something very wicked? No, that I wont!—there's no law for that, I'm sure. Why, if I had maid-and-the-magpied all your silver spoons, you couldn't use me worse!

POR. I don't care for that—go you shall!

MRS. P. (*In the bar.*) Pray, Mr. Porridge, recollect what you are about.

POR. Hold your tongue, Mrs. P.!

MRS. P. (*In the bar.*) I shall hold no such thing, Mr. P.! If you have no care for the poor girl's interest, after all the years she has lived with us, have some regard for your own. The house is full of company, and we want her.

SAL. Thank ye, ma'am!

POR. We'll soon get another.

MRS. P. Soon! You may search England over, and not meet with such another chambermaid as our Sally.

SAL. Bless that mistress of mine!—she's like me, she always speaks the truth.

POR. (*To* SAL.) What's that you're muttering about?

SAL. You never heard me mutter, sir, I'm sure. What I say, I think; and what I think, I say, let who will stand by. My mistress has told you that you wont easily get such another chambermaid, and *I* can tell you you'll never get one at all.

POR. No!—why, what stories are you going to tell about the house?

SAL. No stories at all—I scorn to do such thing! No, sir, I shall tell the truth, and that will make more against you than a hundred stories would.

POR. Indeed!

SAL. Yes, sir; I'll tell all the girls in the island that you turned me away because I wouldn't be false to my sweetheart. I'll tell all the girls in the island that you turned me away because your son Peter,—bless his heart!—was *fond* of me; and then who do you think will take a place with the chance of being packed off like a thief, at a moment's notice, for a thing that might happen to any other pretty girl as easily as to me!

POR. Will you do as I told you, and not make a noise here?

SAL. A what?—a noise?—come, I like that! One's to be kicked like a dog, and not to squeal. However, I know my duty, and while you're my master I shall obey you. I haven't much more to say, and I'll say that as fast as I can. You've told me to go, and I shall; but mind, I shan't come to you for a character, for I don't mean to take another place—I've got plenty of money to live on, and I shall take a lodging close by till your son's of age—if he marries me then, well and good—but if you get him to give me up, souse I go over head and ears into the river that runs at your door, and then, the sooner you sell your inn for what it will fetch, and give up business, the better—for sure as ever you call "chambermaid," so sure shall Sally's ghost be with you.

(*Exit.*)

MRS. P. (*Who comes from bar.*) You'll break that poor girl's heart, Mr. Porridge; and she's as good a servant as ever master had!

POR. I don't much care what else I break, if I break off this silly match! Do you think I'll let my son, with the money I can give him, marry the chambermaid of my own inn?

MRS. P. How did you make that money?—why, by marrying one who understood her duty, and wasn't above it; and now, I suppose, you would have your son get some fine finikin lady for a wife, who will make him give up business as soon as you're dead and gone!—turn gentleman, and become a beggar in three years!

POR. Mrs. Porridge!

MRS. P. Mr. Porridge!

POR. Wife!

MRS. P. Husband!

POR. (*Sternly.*) Do you hear? Do you hear? (*Outer bell rings. After a pause, in which he seems at a loss what to say, and changing his tone.*) Do you hear the door bell? (MRS. P. *goes into the bar;* POR. *opens the glass door*—SANG. *and* BIGGS *enter.*) This way, gentlemen, if you please—this way—beg pardon, I'm sure, for not attending you sooner, but I was just waiting upon Lord What's-his-name, up stairs!—Mrs. P., ring the ostler's bell.

BIGGS. No, no; never mind.

POR. Wouldn't you wish the carriage unloaded, gentlemen?—hope you mean to honour our house by staying all night!

SAN. We have no carriage here, my good friend.

POR. I beg pardon!—making a little tour on horseback, gentlemen, of the Island, no doubt. Have they taken your horses to the stable?—or, perhaps, your own groom——

SAN. My good sir, we have no groom and no horses; we are travelling on foot. (MRS. P. *retires up stage.*)

POR. (*Looking at their dusty boots, and changing his tone.*) Oh! I see.

BIGGS. We're hungry, and want something to eat directly.

POR. I don't wonder at that; you have gone the right way to get an appetite.

SAN. Is your house full?

POR. Very!

SAN. We can have beds to-night, I suppose?

POR. Why, you can—but we have only a double-bedded room at the top of the house.

BIGGS. Never mind about the beds now—have you got a mutton-chop?

POR. Why, gentlemen, to be candid with you, foot passengers generally find themselves more comfortable at the public house a little below; and, if you like, one of my waiters shall shew you there.

SAN. (*To* POR., *and taking him aside.*) Come hither a minute. (BIGGS *goes up stage.*)

POR. Well?

SAN. You were very civil when we came, because you thought us people of consequence; and you have changed your tone because you think us people of no consequence—now, it's of no consequence to me what you think, and it's of no consequence to you who we are—we mean to stay here! You will be more or less civil as you think fit—only, take this with you—If you are civil, you will never have cause to regret it; if uncivil, the time may come when you may wish you had been civil! (*Raising his voice.*) I say, sir, the day may arrive, when you will discover that I am—

POR. What?

BIGGS. (*Comes down the centre. Interrupting him.*) My

—nephew!—my nephew! that's all. (*Aside to* SAN.) What the deuce are you about?—giving the landlord some of your mysterious insinuations of grandeur, which I shall have to pay for, as usual.

SAN. Let me alone, uncle Biggs.

P. S. *Aside.* I can't make out what these fellows are—the tall one's either a great man or a great impostor, and I can't tell which. Well, they may have their chops at all events. *Aloud.* Mrs. P., order some chops for these gentlemen, and let them be shewn into the coffee-room.

(*Going.*)

SAN. Landlord!

P. S. *Roughly.* Well! (*More civilly.*) Sir!

SAN. Send the Boots here, will you?

P. S. *To* Mrs. P. Ring for Boots. (*Exit by bar.*)

(MRS. P. *rings.*)

BIGGS. *To* MRS. P. How long will it be to dinner, landlady?

MRS. P. *With curtsey up.* I suppose you'll want some potatoes?

BIGGS. *To* SAN. What do you say? We shall have it without.

SAN. Oh! potatoes by all means.

MRS. P. Half-an-hour. (*Exit by bar.*)

BIGGS. Half-an-hour!—it seems like sentence of death.

Enter BOOTS, R. 1 E., *with boot-jack, and two pairs of slippers.*

SAN. *To* BOOTS. I say, my man. Oh! you've got them. That's a smart fellow. Here, lend me your shoulder. (*Leans on him, and pulls off boots, and puts on slippers.*)

BOOTS. (*To* BIGGS.) *You* have *your* boots off, sir?

BIGGS. No, I thank you.

BOOTS. Better, sir, after walking.

BIGGS. (*Angrily.*) No, I tell you—be off with you.

(BOOTS *bows, and exit.*)

SAN. Now don't snub Boots, uncle Biggs. I like the Boots better than any one else in an inn. Your landlord and landlady are civil in proportion to the length of the bill; even your waiters and chambermaids have a regular assortment of bows and courtesys to suit their various paymasters; but honest old never-varying Boots gets his sixpence from the peer, and he can't have less from any one. The consequence is, that he is always obliging—always at his post; and he gives every one the same impartial bow for the same money.

BIGGS. Now how are we to pass this dreadful half-hour till our chops are ready?

SAN. I shall go up stairs somewhere, and wash my hands, and perhaps take a little nap.

BIGGS. What! more dreams?

SAN. (*Going up stairs.*) Aye; but *such* dreams! (*Calling.*) Waiter!

Enter WAITER, R. 1 E.

WAIT. Yes, sir.

SAN. Send the chambermaid.

WAIT. (*Going.*) Chambermaid!

Enter SALLY, R. 1 E.

SAL. I[illegible]? (*To* SAN.)

SAN. [illegible] *her, and chucking her under the*

chin)—Egad, you're a nice little body. Can I wash my hands somewhere?

SAL. (*Pointing up the stairs.*) Yes, sir, up in that room —(*Aside*)—and I wish you'd done it before you wiped 'em on my face. (*Crosses, and enters bar,* L. 2 E.)

(SAN. *goes up stairs, and enters room.*)

BIGGS. (*To* WAITER.) The library, you say, is just opposite? (*Going.*)

WAIT. Yes, sir. You'll find plenty of newspapers there. Our's are all engaged just now.

BIGGS. Where's the post-office?

WAIT. At the library, sir.

BIGGS. I say, my boy, I'll give you sixpence extra if you'll run over the way, and tell me when the chops are ready.

WAIT. Very well, sir. (*Exit* BIGGS *at centre door.*)

(SAN. *reappears at door of bed-room with* SALLY'S *bonnet.*)

SAN. I'm afraid this room belongs to somebody else—here's a bonnet.

SAL. (*Running across.*) Oh! it's nothing. Throw it down, please sir.

SAN. Catch then. (*Throws it to her.*)

SAL. Gemini! I forgot I left this up there.

(*Exit with bonnet,* R. H.)

SAN. And I say, Waiter!

WAIT. Sir!

SAN. Just bear in mind that I am up here, will you? and give me a call when the chops are ready.

WAIT. Yes, sir.

SAN. Now don't forget, because I see a remarkably com-

fortable-looking great chair here; and I'm aware that I sometimes fall asleep in the day-time.

WAIT. Very well, sir.

SAN. I don't say I shall; but I may—you understand—I *may*.

WAIT. I'll take care, sir.

SAN. (*Looking into room.*) Upon my life, it's a most inviting-looking chair. (*Exit to room.*)

SCENE IV.

Same as Second.

Enter WAITER, L.—*he is met by* BOOTS, *who, rushing in from opposite side, runs against him.*

WAIT. Hollo! take care!

BOOTS. Where's Missus gone?

WAIT. Don't know.

BOOTS. Where's Master?

WAIT. Can't tell.

BOOTS. Where's Mr. Peter?

WAIT. Haven't seen him. What's the matter?

BOOTS. Can't stop to tell. (*Running off,* R.)

(POR. *seen entering,* L.)

WAIT. Here!—come back, stupid—here's Master.

BOOTS. (*Returning.*) Where?

WAIT. (*Pointing.*) There.

(BOOTS *meets* POR., *and whispers him.*)

POR. (*Evidently astonished.*) What!—when?—just now? *Who* do you say? (BOOTS *whispers him again.*) Bless my

soul, is it possible? The one that went into the room to wash his hands, do you say? (BOOTS *nods assent.*) Bless my soul, here's a discovery—a pretty mess I had like to have got into. Here, Mrs. Porridge, I say!—Peter, where are you? (*To* BOOTS.) Call all the Waiters—ring the Waiters' bell—ring the Chambermaid's bell—ring the Ostler's bell—ring your own bell. (BOOTS *and* WAITER *enter bar, and ring various bells.*) Mrs. Porridge, I say! Bless me, it puts me in a fever to think of the escape I have had. (*Calling.*) Mrs. Porridge!—Peter!—John!—Thomas!—Sally!—everybody!

Enter, at different points, MRS. PORRIDGE, JOHN, THOMAS, OSTLER, *and* BOOTS.

ALL. (*Except* MRS. P.) Here, sir, here!

MRS. P. What's the matter, my dear?

POR. Nothing—something—everything—I've made a terrible mistake.

MRS. P. What!—in a customer's bill?

POR. No—in a customer himself.

MRS. P. What sort of a mistake?

POR. Can't stop to explain. Follow me, all of you.

(*Runs off* L., *followed by* MRS. P. *and the rest.*)

SCENE V.

Bed-room in the same—toilet table, with towels &c., as if used—SANGUINE *discovered asleep in an arm-chair, with a handkerchief tied over his head—Door in flat.*

Church bells heard ringing in the distance—SAN. *moves about as if under the influence of a dream—After a little while,*

SAN. (*In a low tone, and imitating the chimes.*) 1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8;—1—2—3—4. (*Snores.*) So, so—come at last. Set those money bags down here. Stay—gently—not so fast—a thousand pounds in each, you say? Let me count them. (*Speaking.*) 1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8. Good,—that will do for the present. (*Snores.*)

(POR. *opens the door very gently, and peeps in.*)

POR. (*Speaking in a whisper as to people outside.*) Hush! Stand back—not yet—he's fast asleep. (*Shuts door.*)

SAN. Haste, ye knaves, and spread the banquet; my guests will be here directly. Where's my groom of the chambers? See!—see! the carriages begin to come up the avenue. Look at them!—look at them! (*Speaking.*) 1—2—3—4—5—6—7—8. Quick—throw open the great gates—line the staircase—let the bells of my castle ring out a merry peal. (*Bells heard again in the distance.*) Good—good; but how is this? No music—where is my band? (*A march is played very piano by the orchestra. While it is played,* SAN. *bows to the right and left, as if to his guests. Band ceases.*) Good—good—good. (*Falls back in his chair and snores loudly.*)

(PORRIDGE *looks in again; but, hearing him snore, speaks to those outside.*)

POR. Not yet—not yet. (*To himself.*) He's talking in his sleep surely. I'll listen.

(*Band repeats a few bars,* SANGUINE *raises himself gently.*)

SAN. Your Royal Highness is welcome to my castle.

POR. (*Aside.*) Royal Highness!

SAN. Ah! my noble uncle, I rejoice to see you recovered from your rheumatism.

POR. His noble uncle!

SAN. Lady Emily, allow me to offer you my arm.

POR. Lady Emily!

SAN. Now for dinner!

POR. He calls for dinner. (*To those outside.*) Now, come on!

(*Steps outside, but immediately returns, carrying two silver branches with lighted candles, and followed by* MRS. PORRIDGE, *with a lighted candle in each hand; two Waiters each with ditto; a boy with a candle in flat candlestick, and Boots and the Ostler; the former carries a piece of candle alight between a split stick, and the latter a stable lanthorn. They all advance towards* SANGUINE'S *chair.*)

POR. (*Turning round, and seeing Boots and Ostler.*) What the deuce do you two vagabonds do here?

BOOTS. You said everybody was to bring lights, sir.

POR. Get out with you! (*Exeunt Boots and Ostler.*)

(*The rest range themselves on either side of* SANGUINE.)

SAN. This ante-room is too dark; why are my orders not obeyed? Bring more lights. What! nobody move when I

speak? More lights, I say—more lights, rascals! (*Pushing his chair violently from him, and starting up; in doing which, he awakes,—seems confused,—rubs his eyes, and looks to the right and left. All bow to him.*) Who are you? and who are you? Am I awake? do I dream? What does all this mean? Somebody explain to me. (*Sits.*)

POR. We thought your—your—your—(*Aside*) Perhaps, as he came incog., I mustn't mention his title. (*Aloud.*) We thought you were pleased to call for lights, and so we brought them to your—your—to you.

SAN. But why do you bring so many?—such a devil of a lot, I may say?

POR. To light your—your—*you* to dinner.

SAN. What, is the chop ready?

POR. Pardon me, sir; but I couldn't think of letting your—your—*you* dine on a chop; and so I have taken the liberty of preparing the best entertainment my house affords.

(*All advance.*)

SAN. (*Aside, rising.*) Can it be? It must—it shall—A flood of light breaks in upon me. My dreams at length are realized; and I *am* a great man. Genius of Whittington! I thank thee. (*Aloud, and spreading out his arms.*) Stand farther from me. (*They move away.*) (SANGUINE *seeing* PORRIDGE.) The landlord! Come hither, landlord. Where's my uncle?

POR. Your noble uncle has stepped out.

SAN. (*Aside.*) My *noble* uncle! What has worked this change? I know not—I care not; my business is to profit by it. (*Paces the stage with great dignity.*)

POR. (*Aside to* MRS. P.) There's a walk! you can see what he is with half an eye.

MRS. P. Where were your two whole ones, that you didn't see it before?

POR. Where were your's?

MRS. P. Hush!—he's going to speak.

SAN. Is the dinner ready?

POR. Yes, your—your—

SAN. (*Aside.*) I wish he'd finish—I want to know what I am. (*Aloud and sharply.*) Your *what*, fellow?

POR. I beg pardon—Yes, *sir*; it *is* ready.

SAN. So am I.

(PORRIDGE *proceeds towards the door, walking backwards, and holding out the branches.* SANGUINE *passes between the others; they bow; he returns their bows familiarly at first, but checking himself, assumes more dignity, and finally goes off by door in flat, with much swagger, lighted and attended.*)

SCENE VI.

A superior Apartment in the Inn. Chandeliers lighted. A table, handsomely decorated, set out, with two covers laid. In another place, sideboard of plate. Folding-doors in flat. The folding-doors are thrown open, and PORRIDGE *is seen lighting in* SANGUINE. *The others, with candles as before, form on each side of the door.* SANGUINE *advances to the front, looking about him.* PORRIDGE *bows as he passes, and places the branches on the dining-table.*

SAN. (*Aside.*) As this fellow seems to be the first to know of my exaltation, he shall be the first to feel it. (*Aloud.*) Let all depart but the landlord.

POR. Depart, and shut the door.

(*They exeunt, and close the folding-doors.*)

SAN. Shut your mouth, and come here. (PORRIDGE *advances and bows.*) Bring me a chair. (PORRIDGE *puts chair;* SANGUINE *sits.*) You were little short of rude to me when I first came.

POR. Pardon—pardon!

SAN. I shall consider of that. What has changed your note?

POR. May I speak?

SAN. I wish you to do so; I shall take it as a favour if you will—I request it. (PORRIDGE *bows.*) I desire it. (PORRIDGE *bows.*) (*Aside.*) I'll try it a little stronger still. (*Aloud.*) I *command* it.

POR. I obey. (*Looking round cautiously, and then speaking with an air of mystery.*) An accident has discovered to me your exalted rank.

SAN. Oh, it has?

POR. Yes; but I'll be secret as the grave.

SAN. (*Aside.*) Thank you—I wish you wouldn't—My exalted rank!—It's come at last, then! (*Aloud.*) And do you suppose that I'll reward you for your rudeness by letting you furnish me with an expensive dinner, instead of the eighteen-penny chop it was my intention to have had?

POR. I seek no reward, great sir—I'm a repentant landlord; and I entreat you to condescend to eat the dinner I am going to have the high honour of placing before you, without paying for it.

SAN. A very proper punishment for your impertinence—(*Aside*)—and, considering the state of my purse, a very convenient arrangement. (*Aloud.*) Be it so.

POR. (*Bowing.*) Thanks—thanks, great sir.

SAN. (*Aside.*) You're particularly welcome. (*Aloud.*) Where's my uncle? the little, elderly gentleman, who came with me?

POR. Your noble uncle—

SAN. (*With surprise.*) My *noble* uncle?

POR. I beg pardon; I see you're angry. The little, elderly gentleman is over the way at the circulating library, doing the newspaper the honour to read it.

SAN. Let him be sent for.

POR. I fly. (*Going.*)

SAN. And, hark you—no word to him of the change which has taken place: tell him simply that the chops are ready—shew him in here—shut the door—and when I ring, bring dinner. (PORRIDGE *bows, and exit by folding doors.*)

SAN. (*Rises, and walks about.*) At length, then, my long-expected turn of fortune has arrived! At length my faith in dreams begins to be justified. At length I am—what? Egad, that's exactly what I want to learn. The landlord knows, but he doesn't seem inclined to tell me; and it's excessively awkward for me to ask him—excessively awkward. Forward then, friend Sanguine; take the good the gods provide thee, and trust to the protection of thy good genius. Now for uncle Biggs—I've got an astonisher for him, at all events. (*Folding-door opens.*) And here he comes.

Enter BIGGS, *with an open letter in his hand. Door is shut after him.*

BIGGS. This way, you say—(*Seeing the table, he starts back*)—Hollo! What's all this? Open the door again—there's some mistake.

SAN. Uncle Biggs!

BIGGS. Whose voice is that?

SAN. Whose should it be?

BIGGS. It should be my nephew, Oliver's. (*Approaching.*)

SAN. And it *was*.

BIGGS. And *is*.

SAN. That's doubtful.

BIGGS. What do you mean by doubtful? Give me your hand, my dear boy—Give me your hand. (SANGUINE *rises and shakes hands with him.*) I congratulate you, with all my heart!

SAN. What! you know it?

BIGGS. Know it! to be sure I do.

SAN. Then that rascally landlord has told you.

BIGGS. The landlord! What should he know about it? I met him at the door just as I was rushing over in hopes to be the first to congratulate you on your good fortune; but I am disappointed—it seems you know it.

SAN. (*Bewildered.*) Yes—I know it.

BIGGS. Then I may put my letter in my pocket again. (*Puts it away.*) But I say, Oliver, you must have known this some time, and it wasn't very kind of you to conceal it from *me*.

SAN. What do you mean by conceal it from you? It's only since you went out that I dreamt—

BIGGS. Poh, poh! Come along down to the coffee-room. It's high time you had done with dreams.

SAN. You know you never chose to believe in them.

BIGGS. Not I.

SAN. (*Going to the table.*) Believe then, incredulous little uncle, in their realization. (*Rings hand-bell.*)

(*The folding-doors are thrown open, and* PORRIDGE *enters, followed by* PETER *and* WAITER, *each carrying a covered dish, which they place upon the table.* BIGGS *stares with astonishment.* SANGUINE *looks at him, and points, with an air of triumph, at what is going on.* PORRIDGE *advances to* SANGUINE.)

POR. (*Bowing.*) The dinner is served.

SAN. Wait on my uncle, and inform him.

POR. (*Crossing, and bowing to* BIGGS.) The dinner is served.

BIGGS. (*Bowing again.*) Sir, you're very good. (*Crossing, and aside to* SANGUINE.) Nephew, nephew! what have you been about? A little addition to our dinner would have been all very well, under the circumstances; but this is far, far too expensive.

SAN. (*Aside.*) Not at the price.

BIGGS. (*Aside to* SAN.) Well I can't sit down to it, and so it doesn't signify.

SAN. (*Aside to him.*) Uncle, pray take your seat; I beg you'll not expose me in this way.

POR. (*Aside to* PET.) What a ceremony there always is between these great men about who is to sit down first.

BIGGS. Well, I give way; but, indeed you're wrong.

(*Goes to table, followed by* SANGUINE—*they sit—Waiters uncover the dishes.*)

SAN. Soup, uncle?

BIGGS. If you please.

(SANGUINE *helps him, and then himself.*)

POR. (*Aside to* PET.) He won't call him anything but uncle.

SAN. What wines have we here, landlord?

POR. Port, sherry, hock, and champagne, sir.

SAN. You may take away the port and sherry—we never drink them.

POR. *(Makes sign to a Waiter, who removes them—Aside to* PET.) There he betrays himself, you see—none but great princes and newspaper writers say "we."

PET. (*Aside to him.*) Hush, father—let's listen to their conversation.

SAN. Capital soup, landlord.

(PORRIDGE *bows—Waiter removes soup, plates, &c.*)

POR. (*Aside to* PET.) There's dignity.

PET. (*Aside to him*) Astonishing!

SAN. Will you taste this dish, uncle?

BIGGS. If you please. (SAN. *helps him.*)

SAN. Stay—what say you to a glass of wine after your soup?

BIGGS. With all my heart.

SAN. (*To* POR.) Two glasses of champagne.

POR. (*To Waiter.*) Hand the champagne.

(*Waiter hands it—they drink.*)

SAN. Very fair wine, that—I say, uncle—do you remember a certain dinner we talked of?

BIGGS. Aye, quite well; but that was before you knew you were coming to the Crown.

SAN. Hush!

PET. (*Aside to* POR.) Did you hear that, father? "Before he knew he was coming to the crown."

POR. (*Aside to him.*) Silence, boy—leave all to me; and our fortune's made.

SAN. (*To* POR.) Is that young man a son of your's?

(PETER *bows.*)

POR. Yes, your—sir—(*To* PETER)—Bow, Peter.

PET. I did, father.

POR. Then bow again. (PETER *bows again.*)

SAN. A well-mannered lad, upon my word—what are you going to make of him?

POR. I hardly know what to make of him, sir.

SAN. (*To* PET.) What do you wish to be?

PET. I wish to be married, sir.

POR. (*To* PET.) Silence.

SAN. (*To* POR.) Silence yourself, sir; I'm speaking. (POR. *bows.*) (*To* PETER.) Is your father rich?

PET. Very rich, sir.

SAN. I'm glad to hear it. ——— More champagne. (*Waiter hands it.*) And who is it you wish to marry?

PET. Our Sally, please sir—Sally chambermaid.

(SALLY *calls without "Peter, Peter—where are you, Peter?"*

That's her that's calling me now. (*Going.*)

POR. Come back you—how dare you?

SAN. (*To* POR.) Silence, fellow. (*To* PET.) Stay here, friend. (*To Waiter.*) Tell that young woman to come in.

(*Exit Waiter, by folding doors.*)

BIGGS. (*Aside to* SAN.) Nephew, nephew, you'll carry this joke too far.

SAN. (*Aside to him.*) Joke!—do you know who I am?

BIGGS. I don't think I do.

SAN. (*Aside*) Nor I.

(*Re-enter Waiter, with* SALLY, *who has her bonnet on—a bundle in one hand and a bandbox in the other*—MRS. PORRIDGE *follows.*)

Come forward, young woman; what is it you want?

SAL. (*Falling on her knees.*) Please your honour's worship's grandeur—I hope I'm not too bold—I didn't mean to disturb you at your meal; but I'm going away for life, as a body may say; and I only wanted to say "good bye" to my Peter once more before I went.

SAN. Rise, young woman. (*She rises.*) Uncle, have you dined?

BIGGS. Capitally—never better.

SAN. Put chairs there. (*Rises, followed by* BIGGS—*two chairs are put, and they advance to them.*) Uncle, be seated; I'll hear this cause, and administer justice in person.

BIGGS. (*Aside.*) Administer justice!—his bit of money has turned his brain.

SAN. (*To* SALLY.) And so you're going away for life?

SAL. Yes, please your greatness; master says I make nothing but mischief here, and so he has sent me away for good.

SAN. (*Aside to* PET.) Is this the young woman you wish to marry?

POR. (*Angrily.*) Sir—she's—

SAN. (*Interrupting him.*) Hold your tongue, sir. (POR. *bows.*) (*To* PET.) Answer, you.

PET. Yes, sir.

SAN. Is there anything against her?

MRS. P. Nobody can justly say a word against her—she's as good a girl as ever lived.

SAN. You are the mistress of this inn, I believe?

MRS. P. (*Courtesying.*) Yes, sir.

SAN. I'll take your character of her. (*To* POR.) Your only objection seems to be that this poor girl has no fortune.

POR. That's all, sir.

SAN. Come hither to me—nearer, sir—nearer yet—(*Aside to him.*) You know who I am, I believe?

POR. I do.

SAN. Perhaps you are of opinion that if I choose I can make a handsome settlement upon her.

POR. That doesn't admit of a doubt.

SAN. (*Aside.*) Doesn't it? (*To him.*) Then if I ask you to give your consent to the match—

POR. I dare not refuse it.

SAN. Enough said. (*Aloud.*) The young man, Peter, may be united to the young woman, Sally. The elder Mr. Porridge gives his consent.

(SALLY *throws away the bundles, and she and* PETER *embrace.*)

SAN. (*To* POR.) Here—one word more—Where's your pocket book? (POR. *produces it*—SAN. *turns over bank notes and selects one.*) Give your future daughter-in-law fifty pounds for an outfit—and (*very significantly*) *don't* tell her it comes from me. (POR. *bows and takes note.*) You understand me;—if I were to take a large sum out of my pocket at once, it might seem extraordinary. (POR. *bows, crosses to* SALLY, *and gives note—they shake hands.*) (*Aside.*) To no one more than myself; and now, friend Porridge, I flatter myself I've made you pay for your impudence to-day.

BIGGS. Nephew—what on earth does all this mean?

SAN. Time will shew. (*Aside.*) I suppose.

SAL. (*Approaching* SAN.) I know who it is that I have to thank for all this! (*Courtesying.*) Bless your greatness!

SAN. Oh! *you* know, too, do you? (*Aside.*) How very singular that I should be the only person that doesn't! Egad! I'll make *her* tell me. (*Aloud.*) Stand back all of you! I wish to speak with this young woman in private—uncle, oblige me. (*They stand back*—BIGGS *leaves his chair, and*

retires up the stage.) (*To* SALLY, *and chucking her under the chin.*) You're a nice little body, Sally!

SAL. So your greatness was pleased to say before.

SAN. And so you really know who I am, do you?

SAL. I do.

SAN. And who told you?

SAL. Our Boots.

SAN. And who told him?

SAL. *Your* boots.

SAN. *My* boots?—you're mad, child!

SAL. Not the least mad, your greatness. *Our* Boots had *your* boots to clean, and their was your greatness's name in them at full length.

SAN. What name?

SAL. Your own—the Prince of Orange—

SAN. The Prince of what?

SAL. The Prince of Orange! (SAN. *sinks into chair, covers his face with his hands, and laughs vehemently*—SALLY *falls on her knees by him.*) Oh! dear; what have I said? I hope I haven't done wrong!

SAN. (*After trying once or twice to suppress his laughter.*) Rise, young woman, there's no harm done; but just go to *your* Boots, (*She rises,*) who has got mine, and tell them to bring one another here.

SAL. Yes, your greatness! (*After one or two attempts to pass in front of his chair, she passes behind it, and exit.*)

SAN. (*Rising.*) Poor thing!—poor thing!—frightened at my supposed greatness! This, then, is the solution of the mystery—the spell is dissolved, and my royalty is not in my crown, but in my boots!—in a pair of misfits, for which I gave three crowns the day before I left London!—ha! ha! ha!

Oh! (*Checking himself.*) Stay—what are they all about? (*Looking round.*) Watching me with interest!—good!—they believe it yet! The Prince of Orange am I?—the Prince of Orange I'll remain, then; for if I undeceive them, I am *indeed* a Dutchman!—but how to get away?—I must make a confidant of uncle Biggs—he'll laugh at me, but better one should than all of them. (*Calling.*) Uncle, (BIGGS *comes to him,*) here has been a slight mistake,—I am not the person for whom this was intended.

BIGGS. Not the person, Oliver? What do you mean? I say you *are.*

SAN. Poor dear little Biggs, you're as mad as the rest.

BIGGS. Go along with your nonsense about madness. (*Taking out letter.*) Do you think I can't read?

SAN. What's that?

BIGGS. Why, the letter which I got just now at the Post-office about your godfather and the legacy. I offered it to you, but you said you knew all about it, and wouldn't condescend to read it.

SAN. Give it me. (*Snatching it eagerly—reads.*) "Dear Uncle Biggs,—Brother Oliver's godfather—old Mr. Pipps, the orange merchant—is dead at last, and has left Oliver a hundred and fifty pounds a year. I write the news to you, in order that if Oliver should be asleep when the letter arrives, you may wake him and tell him of his good fortune.—Your affectionate nephew, JAMES SANGUINE." Asleep when the letter arrives—the satirical rogue!

BIGGS. I hope you're satisfied now.

SAN. Upon my life I'm better satisfied than I was, I can assure you. Poor, dear Pipps! What an excellent godfather that man has made me. (*Aside.*) One hundred and

fifty pounds a-year! Why, he was the very prince of orange-merchants. Aha! What did I say? 'the prince of orange-merchants,' and *I* the Prince of Orange! There's a coincidence,—I suppose I'm to be told there's nothing in that.

BIGGS. You seem quite overpowered with your good luck.

SAN. I am indeed. I always knew that old Pipps *said* he would leave me an independence; but I never *dreamt* of his doing it. Let all approach.

(*They all come down on one side of the stage as* SALLY *re-enters at folding-doors, followed by* BOOTS, *carrying* SANGUINE'S *boots, shining brightly.* SALLY *kneels; all the household do the same, except* BOOTS.)

SAL. Boots with your greatness's boots.

SAN. Rise, good people—(*they rise*)—and utter no names. Say "sir"—It is my present wish to leave this town without its being known *who I really am.* (*They all bow.*) When you see me here again, I give you free leave to mention it. (*They bow again.*) Boots, do your duty. (*He sits down:* BOOTS *hands him boots and boot-hooks, and he puts them on, first taking a sly peep in the inside, and suppressing his laughter.*) Mr. Porridge!

POR. Sir?

SAN. Is there any coach to Newport this evening?

POR. There is one at the door now, your—sir.

SAN. Stop it, and book me two inside places.

POR. (*Aside to him.*) Permit me—a chaise-and-four shall be round in five minutes.

SAN. (*Raising his voice.*) Book me two inside places, I say; and don't let me ride with my back to the horses, for I shall be sure to be poorly if I do.

(PORRIDGE *bows and makes sign to Waiter, who goes off at folding door.*)

BIGGS. Don't let us go back to-night, Oliver.

SAN. (*Sternly.*) Uncle!

BIGGS. (*Bowing.*) Oh, I beg pardon. You're a great man now, and I suppose I have only to obey.

SAN. Porridge, let Mr. P. Porridge and Miss Sally be married before my return.

POR. They shall, sir.

SAN. (*Aside.*) If they're not, they'll stand but a poor chance. (*Aloud.*) And mind you make them a good father.

POR. Yes, sir.

SAN. Mrs. Porridge!

MRS. P. Yes, sir.

SAN. Make them a good mother.

MRS. P. Yes, sir.

SAN. Peter!

PET. Yes, sir.

SAN. Make Sally a good husband.

PET. Yes, sir.

SAN. Sally!

SAL. Yes, sir.

SAN. Make Peter a good wife.

SAL. Yes, sir.

SAN. And d'ye hear?

SAL. Yes, sir.

SAN. If you have any children, make them good also.

SAL. Yes, sir.

SAN. Waiters!

WAIT. Yes, sir.

SAN. Be good waiters.

WAIT. Yes, sir.

SAN. Uncle!

BIGGS. (*Aside.*) I suppose I must humour the joke, though

I don't understand it. (*Aloud, and with mock submission.*) Yes, sir.

SAN. Be a good uncle, and come along with me.

BIGGS. Yes, sir.

SAN. (*Significantly to landlord.*) Landlord, the *dinner*, you know, *is* paid for.

POR. Yes, sir.

SAN. Pay the waiters handsomely.

WAITERS. (*Bowing.*) Thank you, sir.

POR. And the Boots, sir?

SAN. No;—(*taking money from his pocket*)—as long as I live, I'll remember "the Boots" myself. (*Aside.*) And now I flatter myself no one—not even uncle Biggs—can laugh at me—(*Aloud, and to the audience*)—unless *you* choose to do so; and how to prevent that I'm sure I don't know. Well, well, I see how it is—the more I talk the more you laugh, and so I had better hold my tongue. Laugh—laugh, by all means, but come here to do it—and I'll tell you why. By coming here, you make us a good night, don't you see?—and, as long as you give us "good nights," so long will we, in return, furnish you with "PLEASANT DREAMS."

THE END.



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1834.



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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr. Marmaduke Mildman	Mr. WEBSTER.
Mr. Brown	Mr. LISTON.
John (*ostler*)	Mr. J. BLAND.
Apothecary	Mr. WYMAN.
Mrs. Brown	Mrs. ORGER.
Betty	Mrs. J. BLAND.

Apothecary's Assistants, &c.



KILL OR CURE.

SCENE I.

A Room in a Country Inn; fire-place in one corner, the bar at the other.

(BETTY *is discovered at work.*)

BET. Heighho!—dull work!—every body gone to Doncaster races, except my husband and I. Well, well, it will be our turn next year. I shouldn't mind if there was any business to attend to; but, after the bustle of the morning, it does seem so uncommon lonely. From sun-rise till near eleven o'clock, it was nothing but "Waiter"—"Sir"—"Betty"—"Coming, ma'am"—"John Ostler"—"Coming, Zur"—"Breakfast for three here"—"Cold meat for one"—"Two brandy-and-waters"—"One cold, without"—"One warm, with"—"Some broiled ham directly"—"Glass of rum-and-milk—no nutmeg"—"Make haste and fill this tea-pot"—and on they went, bustle, bustle, to one's heart's content; and now, I suppose, we shan't see a strange face till six or seven o'clock. (*Yard bell rings.*)

MILD. (*Without.*) Ostler!

BET. (*Calling.*) Husband!—John Ostler!—do you hear?

JOHN. (*Without.*) Coming! coming!

BET. (*Coming forward.*) Why, good luck to us, but here is a customer sure enough! As mistress is out of the way, I must come and receive him. (*Smoothing down her apron, and arranging her cap.*) It puts me in a bit of a fluster; but no matter for that,—it will be good practice against John and I keep an inn ourselves.

(*Enter* MILDMAN *in a riding dress,* L. 1 E.)

(*Courtesying.*) Servant, sir.

MILD. (*Speaking off the stage, and not observing her.*) Now, mind what I tell you—you're to change that sixpence—give those two boys three-pence each, and they are not to tease that poor old woman with the donkey any more.

BET. (*Courtesying again.*) Servant, sir.

MILD. Good morning to you, my dear—why, your house seems almost deserted.

BET. Quite, sir; at least, there's only John and me left.

MILD. That is John, I suppose, who has just taken my horse.

BET. Yes, sir; John Ostler—he's my husband, sir, if you please.

MILD. If I please!—to be sure I do, my dear; nothing could please me better—that is, if you agree.

BET. La! sir, we agree like two twins. John's as good temper'd a fellow as ever cleaned a horse, and, saving your presence, sir, though I say it, I'm another.

MILD. Delightful! we shall be good friends I see—but where is every body gone to?

BET. Gone!—la! sir, why, where your're going to be sure.

MILD. Well, if you know where I'm going to, you know

more than I do!—I ride from place to place for my amusement—for my health. I stop when either my horse or I need rest or refreshment, or when I think my presence and assistance may be serviceable to others.

BET. (*Aside.*) What an odd gentleman!

MILD. But where did you think I was going?

BET. I hope no offence, sir, but I thought, of course, you were going to Doncaster races.

MILD. My dear, I never take offence unless I am well assured it is intended; and if such were the general rule, there would be much less quarrelling in the world. I never go to horse-races. (BETTY *puts a chair; he sits down.*)

Enter JOHN, L. 1 E., *hearing the last words.*

JOHN. (*Aside, in astonishment.*) Never go to horse-races! (*Aloud.*) I ax pardon, zur, but you never can be a Yorkshireman?

MILD. I never can *now*, John, most assuredly—it is too late—I was born in London.

JOHN. I' London—well, but you've got races close at hand there—there's Egham, I think they call it, and Epsom, and such like—Darby ben't Ledger, we all know, but still it's a race.

BET. But don't you hear that the gentleman doesn't like races?

JOHN. Stuff, lass—don't you be trying to come over me with such nonsense! Not like a horse-race, indeed?—no, no, I'm far enough north to know better than that!

MILD. Strange as it may appear to you, my worthy friend, it is nevertheless true. I object to races in general.

JOHN. Races in general, if you will, but that's nought to do wi' Ledger.

MILD. To me they are all alike.

JOHN. Did you ever see a racing stable?

MILD. I have.

JOHN. Pretty tidyish living there, I reckon?

MILD. True.

JOHN. And then you've got to recollect, that one of them horses don't do as much work in a year as I do in a week.

MILD. True, again; but when you are fatigued with work, and wish to rest, your master does not stick a pitchfork in your sides to goad you on.

JOHN. And do you think they mind that if it no but helps them to win?—no, not a bit of it!

BET. Don't speak so, John; the gentleman will think you rude.

MILD. Not at all!—not at all!—I like people to express their own opinions their own way. We'll finish this subject another time; but now, tell me, who is the landlord of this inn?

JOHN. Muster Brown, sir.

MILD. Is there a landlady?

BET. A landlady? I believe there is, indeed! (*Exchanges nods and winks with* JOHN.)

MILD. They are both from home, I suppose. (JOHN *looks across at* BETTY *and laughs*—BETTY *laughs also.*) I say, I suppose they are both from home. (*They laugh more.*) I am not aware that I have said anything very comical, and, as soon as convenient, I should like an answer.

BET. (*Checking her laughter.*) I beg pardon, sir, but we can't help laughing—it's a joke between us. (*They laugh again.*)

MILD. What is a joke, my good woman?—where are they gone to?

JOHN. To Doncaster races. (*They laugh louder than ever.*)

MILD. Is *that* astonishing? Just now you seemed to think that nobody could stay away.

JOHN. Nay, sir; it's not astonishing that they should go to races, but that they should go *together*.

MILD. Why, don't I understand that they are husband and wife?

JOHN. That's it, sir; that's it—to be sure they may well go *out* for a day's pleasure, for they never gets one at home! Oh! dear—oh! dear—if you did but see how master and mistress do jangle—

MILD. (*Rising.*) Jangle!—man and wife jangle!—this must be put a stop to—tell me more about them.

BET. I will, sir. You must know, mistress was a widow, and owned this inn. Master was a painter, and used to paint people's likenesses—but he made them *so like*, that all the folks thought their pictures too ugly, and so he couldn't get employed in London, and was obliged to travel about the country to paint signs and such like. About two years ago, he stopped here—painted mistress a new sign, and then painted her picture. Mistress liked the picture, and master liked the original—and so they married, and if you please, sir, (*Courtesying,*) he has stopped here ever since.

MILD. So far, so good! but (*To* JOHN,) you say they quarrel—how is that?

JOHN. How sir?—oh! all kinds o'ways.

MILD. I understand; but what is the cause of it?

JOHN. Everything that happens, sir; no matter what!—they seem to have forgotten all about "Love, honour, and obey," and you know, sir, that's very wrong. Though I stand here to say it, they needn't be ashamed to take pattern

by Bess and me—we sets our horses capital together, don't us, Bess? *I* loves and honours, and *she*, like a good lass, does *both*, and *obeys* into the bargain!

MILD. Excellent!—excellent!—but they *shall* take pattern by you. I shall make it my business to make them friends—they're both in fault, of course?

JOHN. There's not much doubt about that, sir, I believe.

MILD. I supposed so; but never mind, I'll make them friends, I tell you.

BET. I wish you could, sir, with all my heart! They've never been friends for half-an-hour since last races till this morning; and they only made it up then because they both wanted to go, and there was only one gig. Last year, they quarrelled on the road and turned back; and, to tell you a secret, John and I have laid one another sixpence that they'll do the same thing to-day.

MILD. I almost wish they may, for then I shall be able to begin with them the sooner—you good folks must assist me, and I will reward you. (*To* JOHN.) Look after my horse,—and you (*To* BETTY,) shew me a room. I shall stay here till to-morrow, and longer if I find it necessary.

(BETTY *is leading the way to an inner room;* MILDMAN *is following.*)

JOHN. As they're all out, sir, shall I take your boots and spurs off before I go?

MILD. My good friend, I always find animals as sensible of kind treatment as human beings—frequently *more so*. I never ride with either whip or spur.

JOHN. (*Aside.*) It be quite pretty to hear him talk, I declare. (*Aloud.*) What be I to give your horse, sir?

MILD. A good cleaning, a good bed, and plenty to eat and

drink; in short, make my beast comfortable, and I'll make you so. (*Going.*)

JOHN. He shall be all right, sir, depend upon it. (*Going.*)

MILD. Stay; how many horses are there in the same stable with him?

JOHN. Five, sir.

MILD. Then, when you feed him, give them all a feed a-piece, and charge it to me—it worries and vexes the poor things to hear another horse eating when they have got nothing. (*Exeunt* MILDMAN *and* BETTY, R. 1 E.)

JOHN. He's a very nice man, but I reckon he's getten cracked at head. (*Exit*, L. 1 E.)

SCENE II.

Exterior of the Inn, left hand; on right, a stable, the door of which is open; a saddle and bridle are hanging against the door, and JOHN *is discovered whistling, and cleaning them. At the back, a low wall, with gate in centre, leading to farm-yard. Distant view of Doncaster race-course in the back ground.*

JOHN. If that there gentleman's horse was to stumble, down he might go for all the help he'd get from such a bridle as this here. I never see such a bit o' nonsense in all my life to put in a horse's mouth; but I suppose it be to keep him comfortable.

(*Working and singing.*)

" For it's my delight
On a shiny night,
In the season o' the year."

There (*feeling in his pocket*): and now for the key of the corn-bin.

MILD. (*Opening and looking out of an upper window.*) John Ostler!

JOHN. Sir.

MILD. There are two cocks fighting in the farm-yard. (JOHN *runs eagerly, as if to see them.*) Stay, part them—there's a good lad. (JOHN *stoops, as if to pick up a stone.*) Don't do that—don't throw a stone—you may hurt one of them. (*Shuts window.*)

JOHN. Part fighting cocks!—oh! I knowed he was cracked. (*Opens gate, and enters farm-yard.*) (*Putting his hand above his eyes, and looking off the stage.*) My old shoes! but who's that coming over the hill?—oh, capital.

(*Re-enters hastily, closing the gate after him.*)

Betty, Betty! Come here, lass—I've won my wager.

Enter BETTY *hastily, from Inn.*

BET. What's the matter, John?

JOHN. Matter? Have you got such a thing as sixpence about you? 'Cause you may just hand it over.

BET. Why you never mean to say—

JOHN. Yes, but I do though—you know t'old chaise with the two seats—one so—and t'other so—

BET. Yes.

Re-enter MILDMAN.

JOHN. Hang me, if our governor and his lady, as went out

this morning side by side, ben't a jogging home already, back to back. (*John and* Betty *are running towards the gate to see.*)

Mild. Stay, stay—come back—now mind what I tell you—keep you both as much out of the way as you can, and leave them to me. (*To* John.) Go you to your stable. (*To* Betty.) And come you into the house—I shall watch their proceedings.

(John *goes to stable*—Mildman *re-enters house, sending* Betty *before him.*)

Mrs. B. (*Speaking without.*) Woh! woh! I say—woh! you want to upset me, you brute, you do—you'll break my neck before I get home, now.

(Mr. *and* Mrs. Brown *appear in a double-seated chaise, sitting back to back*—Brown *throws down the reins, and jumps off—opens the gate in a passion—slams it to—walks hastily to the front of the stage, talking to himself—takes one or two hasty turns, and then strides into the house.*)

Mrs. B. (*Calling.*) Mr. Brown—Mr. Brown. (*Screaming.*) Mr. Brown! Was there ever such a brute?—to leave me stuck up here, to get out as I can.

John. (*Who has resumed his work, singing.*)

"Oh, it's my delight
On a shiny night,
In the season o' the year."

(Mildman *re-appears at window.*)

Mrs. B. John Ostler—Come here this instant.

John. Coming, Ma'am. (*Going towards gate.*)

Mrs. B. (*Mocking him.*) Coming, Ma'am. (*Angrily.*) What do you wait to be told for?

John. Nay, I were behind door, and I didn't see you. (*Passes through gate.*)

MRS. B. And you didn't hear me, I suppose?

(JOHN *hands her out.*)

MILD. It seems to me as if this would be one of the toughest jobs I have had for a long time. (*Shuts window.*)

(MRS. B. *and* JOHN *arrive at the front of the stage.*)

MRS. B. Where's your precious master gone? (JOHN *points to the house.*) Pretty treatment, this, from a man that hadn't a penny piece of his own till I married him. (JOHN *stands quite still, and stares, but makes no answer.*) (*Impatiently.*) Much as you've seen of his temper, you'd hardly believe the way in which he has behaved to me to-day. (*No answer.*) (*Getting more impatient.*) We havn't been to the races. (*No answer.*) (*Going up to him, and bawling in his ear.*) Mr. John Ostler, I'm speaking to you.

JOHN. (*Putting his hand to his ear.*) Yes, Ma'am.

MRS. B. Arn't I to have common civility from anybody to-day?

JOHN. (*Recovering himself.*) I ax, pardon, Ma'am, I'm sure.

MRS. B. Well; why don't you speak to me?

JOHN. (*Very civilly, and after a slight pause.*) I'm glad to see you home again, Ma'am.

MRS. B. You wretch—you fiend—what do you mean by that? How dare you say such a thing, when you know I didn't wish to come? Go back to your work. (JOHN *is going.*) Stay, come back; take that. (*Throws her cloak over his head.*) (JOHN *returns to his work.*)

JOHN. (*Singing.*)

"When the stormy winds do blow—
When the stormy winds do blow—
When the stormy——

MRS. B. Hold your tongue, sir. (*Pacing the stage.*) Upon

my life it's lucky that the races keep the house clear of customers just now. —

(*Re-enter* MILDMAN, *from inn.*)

I don't think I could behave respectfully to one of the county members. (*Turns hastily round, and encounters* MILDMAN.)

MILD. Good morning to you, landlady.

MRS. B. (*Struggling with her anger.* Good —— morning, sir. (*Courtesies.*)

MILD. Excuse the freedom of an old man; but you have one of the most pleasing countenances I ever saw.

MRS. B. (*Trying to smile.*) Do—you—think—so—sir?

MILD. Think so? I'm sure so; can you look in the glass, and doubt it?

MRS. B. You're very good, sir—I'm sure. (*Aside.*) It's quite a relief to have a civil word spoken to one.

MILD. Look you, landlady—you are evidently too good-natured to take what I am going to say amiss; and therefore, although it's generally imprudent for a stranger to intrude himself into family matters, I shall be candid with you. I have just had a few words with your husband.

MRS. B. Have you? I have just had a great many words with him.

MILD. Well, well; I much fear that he is not a good-tempered man.

MRS. B. Good tempered! Good tempered! (*Turning round to him, and with deliberate emphasis.*) Sir—if there *is* a bear—it's Brown.

MILD. I feared so—what a life he must lead you.

MRS. B. Sir, you're a man of penetration—I'm a miserable woman.

MILD. Hope for the best—something must be done to bring him to reason.

MRS. B. Nothing, sir—nothing can be done—he has the only sort of bad temper for which there's no cure. (*Angrily.*) If he were hasty, I could forgive him that. (*More angrily.*) If he were passionate, I could forgive him that.

MILD. Considerate creature!

MRS. B. Nay, sir, he might raise his voice—he might grind his teeth—he might tear his hair—he might stamp his feet—(*Stamping her own*)—All this I could find an excuse for—for human nature is weak; but, sir, he is a sulky man.

MILD. O dear! O dear! that's very bad—we must mend him.

MRS. B. Mend him? You might as well try to mend broken glass.

MILD. I have known *that* done with care and patience. If you were a passionate woman, I confess I should despair of success; but when I find you so ready to make all reasonable allowance—Well, well—be guided by me, and we'll see what can be done—you would be glad to be on good terms with him, I suppose?

MRS. B. You may judge of that, sir, when I tell you that I have lately had strong thoughts of killing myself to get out of his way.

MILD. Fie, fie—don't talk of such things—he is your husband, and you have promised to love—to honour—and to obey him. Now let us see—how stands your account? You honour him?

MRS. B. Who's to honour a man with such a temper as that?

MILD. You obey him?

MRS. B. (*Sighing.*) Ah! that I am forced to do.

MILD. You love him.

MRS. B. (*Sharply.*) *That* I don't.

MILD. Gently, gently, or I shall begin to think *you* hasty. Listen to me, and you will find that I know your history—About two years since he came to your house.

MRS. B. And an unlucky day it was for me!

MILD. Be patient—he was poor and friendless—you pitied and employed him.

MRS. B. I did.

MILD. It was a good act—he was grateful—You became friends, and married?

MRS. B. (*Softened.*) Ah!

MILD. At *that* time you loved him!

MRS. B. I did indeed!

MILD. And you do so still? (*Taking her hand.*) Nay, I'm sure you do! (*Pointing to his heart.*) It's all right *here* with you both. (MRS. B. *appears moved.*) Come—come, put yourself into my hands, do as I tell you, and never fear but I'll leave you happier than I found you!

MRS. B. Kind words, sir, go a great way; I'll do anything you desire.

MILD. Good, good!—then let us at once about it. Go to your husband—speak to him in the voice in which you spoke to him two years ago; remember your own saying—"kind words go a great way." I will be near at hand to watch the result, and to assist you! Come—come!

MRS. B. I'll try, sir, I'm sure; but you don't know how provoking he is—you don't indeed, sir. He is the most troublesome—the most provoking—the most aggravating—

(*Exeunt together to house, talking all the way.*)

SCENE III.

Interior of the Inn, as Scene I.; *a table is put on,* L.H, *on which are tea-things; two chairs.*

Enter BROWN, R. 1 E.; *he takes a chair, which he drags sulkily along the floor to the centre of the stage, and seats himself in it.*

BRO. It's a pleasant thing to have a wife with such a temper—I say it's agreeable!—I say it's particularly agreeable; and how to break her of it, *I* don't know. She's a good-looking woman; indeed, when I married her, I thought her remarkably good-looking—*remarkably;* but she gives way to these fits of passion till she makes herself positively ugly—*ugly.* I shall never see that race if I attempt to go with her—*never!* This is the second year that we have quarrelled on the road, and I've been obliged to turn back; but I'll give her a lesson to-day that shall last her for one while! I'll paint her picture as she looks when she's in one of her passions, and shew it her every time she speaks!

(*Goes to side; brings on easel, on which is canvas for a portrait; takes pallet, sits down, and begins painting. As he does this* MRS. BROWN *looks in,* L. 1 E., *and then enters cautiously*)

MRS. B. (*Aside.*) There he is, and with that sulky look still upon his face!

BRO. (*Aside.*) There she is, and still in a sweet temper, I warrant!

MILD. (*Aside, appearing at the bar.*) There they are; and now to see where my assistance is most wanted.

MRS. B. (*In a coaxing voice.*) Brown, dear!

BRO. (*Aside.*) What's she about now?

MRS. B. Brown, dear!

BRO. (*Mocking her.*) Brown, dear!—what does all this mean?

MRS. B. Are you angry with me still, Mr. Brown?

BRO. Arn't you angry with yourself, Mrs. Brown? Come, come,—this carneying system wont do with me, I can tell you! I know what you want—you're sorry you have missed the race, and you want to go back; but it wont do—it's too late—it's not to be done,—and *I'm* not to be done, Mrs. Brown!

MRS. B. I don't mind about the race, dear—I don't indeed; but I'm sorry I was out of temper, and I'm come to say so. (*Aside.*) It's precious hard work, but I promised, and I'll do it!

MILD. (*Aside*) Excellent—excellent!—She keeps her word!

MRS. B. (*A little impatient.*) I say I'm sorry I was out of temper, (*checking herself as he looks at her,*) and I came to say so!

BRO. Look you, Mrs. Brown, I don't exactly understand what this new tone of your's means—*means, Mrs. Brown;* but this I know, you have been making a fool of yourself, and I suspect—*suspect*—that you want to make a fool of me!

MRS. B. (*Impatiently.*) I want no such thing!

BRO. Ah!

MRS. B. (*In a subdued tone.*) I don't want any such thing—upon my word I don't—I only want to be friends with you. Come—hang the races—let us shake hands and make it up! (*Holding out her hand.*)

BRO. (*Laying down his pallet, rising, and coming forward.*) Do you remember the last time we made it up, and shook hands? It's not long ago!

MRS. B. I know—it was this morning; but don't let us look back—that's some hours ago—and I'm wiser now! Come, don't bear malice!

(BROWN, *who was just going to take her hand, withdraws his.*)

BRO. Malice, my dear!—take care what you say. If you really wish to make it up, you should be careful not to use such expressions as that—*as that*, Mrs. Brown!

MRS. B. I meant no offence; and (*courtseying*) I beg your pardon, my dear. Will that do for you? (*Holding out her hand.*)

BRO. (*Taking her hand.*) Well—well; now you're reasonable, and I'll shake hands with you with pleasure.

MRS. B. (*Delighted.*) With pleasure do you say?

BRO. With pleasure! (*They shake hands heartily.*)

MILD. (*Aside, coming out of the bar.*) Bravo! bravo! but no—(*returning*)—it would be cruel to interrupt them when they're so happy!

BRO. (*In great good humour.*) I say, dear!

MRS. B. What, love?

BRO. And so you really thought I was out of humour with you, did you?

MRS. B. Upon my life it looked very like it!

BRO. Bless your heart, it was all put on—*put on.*

MRS. B. No!

BRO. Yes;—I was sorry to leave you to get out of the chaise by yourself—*very sorry.* You didn't hurt yourself, I hope?

MRS. B. Not a bit—not a bit; but it's a pity we didn't think of making it up on the road, isn't it?—because then we might have seen the race!

BRO. That can't be helped now, my dear;—another time you'll know better!

MRS. B. Yes, love;—another time we shall *both* know better!

BRO. (*Sulkily.*) What do you mean by *both*, Mrs. Brown? —*both!*

MRS. B. Oh, we were both in the wrong, you know!

BRO. (*Angrily.*) No such thing!—*you* were in the wrong, and you only! (*Vehemently.*) If there's one thing on earth that provokes me more than another, it's a stupid, foolish, meddling woman taking hold of the reins when I'm driving!

MRS. B. (*In a great passion.*) If I hadn't done so we should have been overturned!—I say we should have been overturned—overturned!

BRO. My love, you're forgetting yourself already! (*Louder.*) My love! (*Bawling.*) My love!—I say you're forgetting yourself!

MRS. B. Oh, nonsense forgetting!—it's impossible to agree with such a man as you are!—you put yourself out of temper about the least thing! You were not bred a coachman, and what does it signify, supposing you can't drive?

BRO. Drive!—*drive!*

MRS. B. Yes, drive!—if I had said you couldn't paint, now there might have been some excuse for you!

BRO. I expect you'll say that next!

MRS. B. I shouldn't be surprised if I did!

BRO. Very well, ma'am, very well;—you'd better—*better*—

MRS. B. Since you provoke me, I will! (*Walking up to him.*) You can't paint!

BRO. Can't!—can't! (*Runs to the easel and fetches portrait.*) Look here—look here—and see yourself in all your deformity of temper! (*Shews picture;* MRS. B. *screams.*) Now, mind, I'll make a copy of this for every room in the house! (*She walks hastily backwards and forwards, followed by* BROWN *with the picture.*)

MRS. B. Monster!

BRO. And more!—listen to me!—I'll put one of them up before your own house, instead of the sign that's there now, and write under it—The Belle Savage—*The Belle Savage!*

MRS. B. Do, sir, do; but you shall be disappointed of your triumph somehow—I'll do something desperate! (*Very spitefully.*) I don't know that I wont become good-tempered on purpose to vex you!

BRO. Egad! I should like to catch you at it!

MRS. B. Then I wont do that—I'll leave the room—I'll leave the house!—if you attempt to follow me—

BRO. O, don't be alarmed!

MRS. B. Now I know what I'll do!

BRO. Do you?

MRS. B. I do!

BRO. Well, I don't want to know, so don't tell me.

MRS. B. I shall!

BRO. (*Bawling at her.*) Well, *do* then!

MRS. B. I shan't! (*Exit,* L. 1 E.)

(BROWN *puts back the picture, and walks hastily up and down the stage.*)

MILD. (*Coming forward.*) Mr. Brown.

BRO. Sir!

MILD. I'm sorry, Mr. Brown, to be obliged to be a witness to these little family differences; but if you will allow me, I think I can put a stop to them—I think I can persuade Mrs. Brown to—

BRO. Sir, when the wind blows a hurricane, can you persuade the sea to be calm? If not, you may despair of producing any effect upon Mrs. Brown; if you can, all I have to say is, that you're a conjurer, sir—*a conjurer*—though you don't look like one!

MILD. Be it so, if you will; I desire no better than to be allowed to give you a proof of my art. In the first place, it appears to me that Mrs. Brown has a very bad temper—

BRO. You don't call that a proof of your art—do you?

MILD. No, no,—perhaps not; but I'm going on. I think that you are *not* a bad-tempered man, though I know that Mrs. Brown doesn't agree with me!

BRO. Sir, she never agrees with anybody!

MILD. O, but she *will*, never fear. I repeat, that I don't consider you a bad-tempered man!

BRO. (*Softened.*) Sir, you're very kind; I am accustomed to far different language in this house; but, though I say it, I flatter myself there are worse!

MILD. This infirmity of Mrs. Brown's must make you very unhappy.

BRO. Unhappy!—hear me, sir! Life's a burthen to me, and I'm an ass to bear it!

MILD. Still you would be sorry to drive her to extremities?

BRO. If I did, she'd serve me as she did this morning, and make me drive her back.

MILD. I think I can induce her to keep her temper!

BRO. I'd rather you would induce her to get rid of it!

MILD. Well, well,—I'll try it that way; but you must assist me. Bad temper is as great an affliction as bad health, and those who are fortunate enough to escape should be tender towards those who labour under either. Come, you must commission me to intercede;—I shall tell her that you—

BRO. Tell her nothing from me, sir, if you please; she has had her last chance—she has chosen to throw it away, and now I have done with her for ever—*for ever!*

MILD. (*With dignity.*) You may be nearer the truth, Mr. Brown, than you either imagine or intend. You heard what she said upon leaving you?

BRO. What, about poisoning herself? O, yes, I heard that, and I have heard it about fifty times before!

MILD. You may hear it once too often, my good friend; the wolf *may* come at last!

BRO. Not the wolf that is to carry off my lamb, sir.

MILD. Don't be too sure of that;—her manner was wild and desperate;—I shall follow her. (*Going.*)

BRO. (*Going.*) Do, sir, do, by all means; and hark, you, sir.

MILD. Well!

BRO. Be good enough to make my compliments to her, and tell her that there are several excellent poisons, but that the most fashionable one at present is prussic acid—*prussic acid.* (*Exit* R. 1 E.)

MILD. I'll manage you both yet, for all that.

(*Exit* L. 1 E.)

Enter JOHN, R. 1 E., *and* BETTY *from the bar.*

JOHN. Well, Betty, lass, how do stranger get on with his work?

BET. In the first place, master and mistress have made it up.

JOHN. You astonish me!

BET. Yes; but they have quarrelled again!

JOHN. Ah, there you don't astonish me!

BET. Strange gentleman seems quite at a non-plush.

JOHN. I shouldn't wonder; he don't seem much of a betting man; but I wouldn't mind holding him seven to five that I'd break three colts afore he tames missus!

BET. And you'd win, John.

JOHN. Well, I think I should. What are they all at now? I met the master, by-the-bye, as I comed in. He seems in a woundy bad humour.

BET. Mistress is in a worse. What do you think, John?

JOHN. Nay, I don't think, I'm sure.

BET. Well, then, she's going to kill herself.

JOHN. O, stuff.

BET. Stuff, yes, doctor's stuff; she has put her bonnet on, and gone there. (*Tenderly*) John!

JOHN. What say, lass?

BET. How long have we been married?

JOHN. How long!—a twelvemonth next grass. But I say, wife.

BET. Well.

JOHN. (*Holding out his hand.*) You've forgotten that there little sixpence!

BET. O, I shan't pay you that now—I can't afford it.

(*Taking a small screw box from her pocket.*) See here—I've been looking in my money-box, and I have only got eighteen pence left.

JOHN. I don't care for that; if it be the last sixpence you've got in the world you pay your bets like a man!

BET. But only think, John.

JOHN. Now, stop a bit; I wont have any shuffling about that, and so I tell you. You remember my old dad?

BET. Yes.

JOHN. Well, he was as honest a Yorkshireman as ever put leg across horse; and, when he found he was going to die, he called me to him, and he says—"John," says he, "go to church once every Sunday, and when you lose, pay."

BET. And yet I have known both him and you sell horses for forty and fifty pounds that you knew weren't worth twenty.

JOHN. That's quite another matter. If a man don't know his way about a horse, he must pay for his larning; so come, lass, come, hand over.

BET. (*Giving him the sixpence.*) Well, there it is.

JOHN. That's a good chap; and now give us a buss. (*Kisses her.*)

Enter MILDMAN, L. 1 E.

MILD. Charming — charming; here's a lesson for the master and mistress!

JOHN. (*Confused.*) I ax pardon, sir, I'm sure I didn't know as we'd got company.

MILD. No apology—no apology, my good friend; it does my heart good to see you. (*Taking* BETTY'S *hand warmly.*)

We'll have some more kissing in the house before I've done with you.

JOHN. (*Taking her hand, and putting her on the other side of him.*) Which way's that, sir?

MILD. (*Laughing.*) O, don't be alarmed at me—I mean the kissing to be between your master and mistress.

JOHN. I reckon you'd better not tie their heads too close together, sir, for fear they should bite.

MILD. I'll take care.

JOHN. Well, sir, we can cure hams and tongues ourselves, and we've gotten one man at village as can cure smoky chimneys; but if you can cure scolding wives, all I can say is, you may soon make a fortune in these parts.

MILD. Thank you, friend,—thank you. (*To* BETTY.) Your mistress is gone out I find.

BET. Yes, sir, to the doctor's—I saw her go in myself!

MILD. Here she comes—quit the room quickly, and leave her to me; but be at hand both of you.

(*Exeunt* BETTY *and* JOHN, R. 1 E.)

Enter MRS. BROWN, L. 1 E.; *seeing* MILDMAN *she walks hastily across the stage, and endeavours to avoid him.*

MILD. Mrs. Brown.

MRS. B. (*Turning round.*) Sir!

MILD. You have been out?

MRS. B. No, sir—yes, sir.

MILD. To the chemist's?

MRS. B. Y—yes, sir.

MILD. What have you bought?

MRS. B. N—nothing, sir.

MILD. Then I must tell you.—You have bought poison!—produce it!

MRS. B. (*Taking a bottle from her pocket.*) Here it is, sir!

MILD. (*Taking it.*) For whom was this intended?

MRS. B. For—for the rats, sir!

MILD. A two-legged rat, I fear!—for shame—for shame! (MRS. B. *cries.*) But, come, you only meant it as a joke—you want to frighten Mr. Brown into good humour by pretending to kill yourself!

MRS. B. (*Still crying, and courtesying.*) I don't want to kill myself, sir, if it can be done without.

MILD. Of course you don't! Now, then, I'll tell you what to do: go to your husband—if he is in a good humour, which I doubt, well—if not, you must pretend to be in a passion—I say pretend—you can—you *know* you can, for I've seen you; and then pretend that you are going to swallow the contents of this bottle—I say again, pretend! He will be alarmed—he will snatch it from you, and finding what it really is, it will serve him as a warning, and you will live happily together for the future!

MRS. B. (*Joyfully.*) If it should turn out so, sir, I shall never know how to thank you. (*Going,* R. 1 E.)

MILD. (*Playfully.*) Mrs. Brown, you have forgotten your medicine. (*Gives her the bottle.*) Now do strictly as I tell you, and fear not the result. (MRS. B. *is going.*) Stay—he's coming this way—I must leave you—*mind,* I depend upon you. (*Exit to bar.*)

Enter BROWN, R. 1 E.; *he walks to the centre of the stage without seeing his wife.*

BRO. So, I don't hear anything more of the poisoning

business—I'm afraid the fit is gone off. What a silly old gentleman that customer of our's is to be taken in with her empty threats; he certainly is the best natured meddler I ever met with; but he doesn't know the lady quite so well as I do. Poison herself, forsooth—ha! ha! ha!—poison—*poison!*

MRS. B. (*Solemnly.*) Mr. Brown.

BRO. (*Starting.*) Mrs. Ditto.

MRS. B. Are you in a better humour?

BRO. Better than you are at all events.

MRS. B. And still bad?

BRO. I hope so, or else I should be no husband for you!

MRS. B. (*Aside.*) Then I know my cue. (*Aloud, and advancing.*) Look you, Mr. Brown, you soon *shall* be no husband to me!—look at this bottle.

BRO. I see it—it's a pint bottle.

MRS. B. It contains a deadly drug!

BRO. Then I should think a smaller one would do!

MRS. B. No joking, sir—I'm going to swallow it!

BRO. What, the bottle?

MRS. B. No, unfeeling monster, the poison!

BRO. But don't drink out of the bottle—allow me to fetch you a tumbler. (*Going towards the bar.*)

MRS. B. (*Hastily getting between him and it.*) Stay, sir; I wont be indebted to you even for that—I'll fetch one myself!

(*Goes to bar, and gets a tumbler;* MILDMAN *appears and gives her an encouraging shake of the hand.*)

BRO. (*Aside.*) She's at her old tricks, but it wont do with me.

MRS. B. (*Returning.*) Now, sir, look here. (*Pours some of it into tumbler.*)

BRO. Nice looking stuff, I declare. I say, Mrs. B., if it's expensive, you know, you had better not take more than you actually want.

MRS. B. (*Aside.*) The wretch don't offer to interrupt me,—he'd let me take it, I do believe. (*Aloud.*) Look here, sir, I say. (*Pours out more.*)

BRO. Don't spill it—don't spill it; I hate waste!

MRS. B. (*Aside.*) What in the world am I to do now? I can't put off taking it any longer. One more try! (*Aloud, earnestly and throwing herself on one knee.*) Brown, you brute, farewell! As the woman said the other night at the play—"*This* do I drink to thee!"

BRO. (*Vehemently, and seizing her hand.*) Rash woman, forbear!

MRS. B. (*Aside.*) So he's moved at last. (*Aloud, and getting up.*) Well, sir?

BRO. I think it's particularly rude in you not to drink my health. (*Laughs.*)

(MILDMAN *rushes forward, and rings bell violently.*)

MILD. Mrs. Brown!—Mrs. Brown! you're wanted.

(MRS. B. *puts the tumbler down on the table.*)

BRO. There, you can't kill yourself just yet, you see, you're wanted. (*Exit* MRS. B., L. 1 E., *followed by* MILDMAN.) (*Laughing.*) 'Pon my life, that customer of our's is as good as a waiter—he attends to all the business of the house. (*Going towards table.*) What the deuce is this stuff, I wonder? (*Taking up the bottle.*) What! the chemist's name, and labelled "Poison!" (*Taking up the tumbler and smelling it.*) This strange smell! It must be—it is, sure enough! Why, she never could really mean to—I don't know—I don't know—such things have occurred! What must I do?

—throw it away? No; I know—it looks just like milk, I'll change it, and try her. (*Runs to bar, puts away tumbler; brings another and pours milk into it, then throws himself into a chair.* BETTY, *who has observed him from within the bar, crosses hastily, and exit,* L. 1 E.) I'm out of breath—she has frightened me, I declare; and yet she couldn't be serious—but whether she was or not I'll read her a lesson!

(*Re-enter* MRS. BROWN.)

Now, ma'am, you had better finish the little job you had in hand.

MRS. B. (*Going towards table.*) You have moved this tumbler.

BRO. Not I!—not I!—I wouldn't touch it on any account—*on any account.*

MRS. B. I say you have!

BRO. Come, come, you shouldn't put yourself in a passion, when you have such a short time to live—there's your tea, drink it.

MRS. B. Do you desire me?

BRO. Certainly!—*certainly!*

MRS. B. You wish it?

BRO. I do.

MRS. B. Then I wont. (*Puts down tumbler.*)

BRO. You wont?

MRS. B. I wont.

BRO. (*Aside.*) Now for it! (*Aloud.*) Then, Mrs. Brown, hear me, and attend to me. (*Goes to table and takes up the tumbler.*) There is but one point on which we seem to agree—we cannot live together—*that's* settled,—one of us must die—you wont; and, therefore, I will!

MRS. B. (*In great alarm.*) Mr. Brown!—Mr. Brown!—where are you *going* to?

BRO. (*With mock solemnity.*) To the neighbouring churchyard!

MRS. B. Oh! dear—oh! dear—what are you going to do?

BRO. Swallow this.

MRS. B. No, no, no, no!—don't, don't!—Mr. Brown, my dear Brown, recollect what you are about!—recollect what good friends we were once! (*He seems about to drink; she runs to him, and prevents him.*) Husband!—my dear husband! hear me one moment. I was in the wrong!—I'm always in the wrong!—I'm wrong now!—I'll never be wrong again! (*Every time he tries to drink she stops him, and screams.*) You *can* drive—you *can* paint! Husband, (*Going on her knees,*) I'm frightened to death!

BRO. Then we'll be buried together. (*Drinks, and sinks into a chair.*)

MRS. B. (*Rising hastily, and ringing bell.*) Help!—murder!—help!—John!—Betty!—Mr. Customer!—help!—help! (*Exit,* L. 1 E.)

BRO. Ha, ha, ha!—but she's got a dose this time, stronger than the one I've taken; I'll teach her to threaten me with taking poison! Ha, ha, ha!—but here she comes again. (*Puts his handkerchief to his face; kicks, and pretends to be suffering.*)

Re-enter MRS. BROWN, *followed by* MILDMAN *and* BETTY.

MRS. B. (*Wringing her hands.*) This way—this way—here he is! Oh! dear—oh! dear—I'm a wretched woman! (*They all hasten to him.*)

MILD. What have you taken, miserable man?

BRO. I don't know—ask that wretched woman!

MILD. Haven't you got an emetic in the house?

BRO. A what?

MRS. B. Betty—Betty—run for the medicine chest!

BET. John's gone over for the doctor; and here he comes.

Enter JOHN.

JOHN. It's all right, sir; you'll be quite comfortable directly—here be Doctor coming with plenty of physic and a stomach-pump.

Enter DOCTOR, *and two assistants,* L. 1 E., *one of them carrying a basin and towel—the other a stomach-pump.*

BRO. (*Jumping up.*) Nonsense — stomach-pump!—I'm better, I tell you—*better*—I don't want it.

(*Walks hastily up and down the stage,* APOTHECARY *by his side—assistants after him—and everybody following.*)

APOTH. This relief is only momentary—Mr. Brown, be advised.

BRO. I tell you it's no such thing, sir—get out, sir—I don't know you, and I don't want you.

APOTH. He don't know me! The fit's coming on again—seize him.

(*They seize, and lift him up—he resists; at length, he breaks from them, and runs off the stage,* R. 1 E., *everybody following, except* MRS. BROWN *and* MILDMAN. MILDMAN *laughs aloud*—MRS. B. *cries.*)

MRS. B. (*Who has thrown herself, exhausted, into a chair.*) Oh, sir, if the doctor is but successful—if he recovers from this, I'll never be in a passion with *him* or anybody else again.

MILD. May I depend on you?

MRS. B. You may, indeed.

MILD. Huzza!—then I shall effect my object. Calm yourself—there is nothing to fear. Betty was on the watch for me, and saw him change the stuff while you were away—it was milk he drank.

MRS. B. Oh! what a relief—I'll run and tell the doctor.

(*Going*, R. H.)

MILD. (*Stopping her.*) No, no; you have had your lesson, and he must have his; but mind—never let him learn that you knew what he had taken—beware of ridicule.

MRS. B. I will; I will.

BROWN *re-enters, in a flannel dressing gown, pale and weak, leaning on the* APOTHECARY *and* JOHN—*the rest follow—they bring a chair forward, and place him in it.*

MILD. (*To* APOTH.) Well, sir, how is your patient now?

APOTH. Why, sir, he's ——

BRO. Hold your tongue, you brute; it's no thanks to you that I'm not dead. (*To* MILD.) I'm very well, sir, but very weak.

MILD. (*To* APOTH.) Then, sir, I may relieve you from further attendance—*I* can cure his weakness myself.

(APOTH. *bows and retires, followed by assistants*, L. 1 E.)

(*To* BROWN.) And see—here is an anxious nurse for you. (*Handing* MRS. BROWN *to him.*)

BRO. (*Taking her hand.*) Susan!

MRS. B. Peter!

BRO. I'm afraid we look very ridiculous.

MRS. B. Never mind that; let us agree that it shall be for the last time.

BRO. With all my heart—with all *my heart.* (*Rising, and shaking hands with her.*)

MRS. B. What can we say to this kind gentleman?

MILD. Say nothing; but be happy—let me see you embrace one another, and I'm content. (*They embrace.*) John!

JOHN. Sir.

MILD. What did I tell you just now?

JOHN. What when we were?—oh—I know—Betty, lass, come.

(*They embrace*—BROWN *and* MRS. B. *seeing this, embrace again.*)

MILD. That's right—that's right—my favourite toast is, "Harmony all over the world."

MRS. B. (*Coaxingly.*) Brown, dear—there are more races to-morrow—shall we go?

BRO. I've no objection. (*Leading her forward.*) But we must first ask leave of our customers—*our customers.* (*To the house.*) Ladies and Gentlemen,—Allow me to call your attention to a short advertisement which I mean to insert in the papers: "Angel Hotel, near Doncaster.—Mr. and Mrs. Brown respectfully acquaint the nobility, gentry, and their friends in general, that they have re-opened the above premises, where they trust, by a studious attention to their comforts, to merit a continuance of that flattering encouragement and support which they have so long been accustomed to receive at their hands—*at their hands.*" (*Applauding as he says it the second time.*)

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BEAU NASH;

THE

KING OF BATH.

A COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY

DOUGLAS JERROLD.

AUTHOR OF

"THE RENT DAY," "NELL GWYNNE,"
"THE HOUSEKEEPER," "THE WEDDING GOWN," "JOHN OVERY,"
"BLACK-EYED SUSAN," &c. &c.

PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET.

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CLAPT. To be sure not, sir; the wood and paint carry it; who thinks of the poor devils, who find the words and pull the wires?

WILT. Yet why leave the wisdom of the theatre for the jargon of the puppet-shew?

CLAPT. Sir, I did but follow the example of my betters. They vowed the playhouse was the vulgar produce of barbarous times; and so patronized Punch to display their refinement.

DERB. But why so closely observe me?

CLAPT. We're getting up *Rinaldo and Armidia:* I'm at a short notice to talk and pull for the disconsolate lover.

DERB. Well?

CLAPT. I intend to build myself upon you.

DERB. Upon my soul, I feel the delicacy of the preference.

CLAPT. You ought; 'twill make you a grand Turk with the women.

WILT. Then, you are the established lover of the puppets?

CLAPT. My general line is the kings and queens: Mr. Powel does the quadrupeds and common people. Talking of kings, I have to wait on 'Squire Nash, the king of Bath. 'Tis past his levee time.

DERB. What takes you to Nash? Has he dealings with Punch?

CLAPT. Sir, he has written us a new play.

WILT. Why, what's its purpose?

CLAPT. To brighten the dull, and make neat the slatternly. In short, sir, a cruel blow at the slovens of Bath. 'Tis thought dirty boots, morning caps, and white aprons—in all which matters certain visitors greatly sin—will never

hold up their heads after it. Moreover, there's a sharp moral in the play.

DERB. The moral of Punch! Ha! ha!

CLAPT. And who more fit to preach a moral,—seeing, that Punch has in his day filled the very highest offices; though now, indeed, he has taken to the streets, and, like a tyrant in misfortune, sells his wisdom for bread and garlic? (*Exit.*)

WILT. Is King Nash really the magnifico that rumour trumpets him?

DERB. He is in Bath the despot of the mode: the Nero of the realm of skirts; the Tiberius of a silk stocking.

WILT. And what may be his kingship's origin and history?

DERB. 'Tis said, his father was a blower of glass; and they who best know Nash, see in the son confirmation of the legend. 'Tis certain, our monarch started in life in a red coat; changed it for a templar's suit of black; played and elbowed his way up the back-stairs of fashion; came to our city—championed the virtue of the wells against the malice of a physician; drove the doctor from his post; founded the pump-room and assembly-house; mounted the throne of etiquette; put on her crown of peacock-plumes; and here he sits, Richard Nash, by the grace of impudence, King of Bath!

WILT. And—for I have letters to deliver,—what is the creature's character?

DERB. 'Tis made up of equal patches of black and white; a moral chess-board, the moves once known, readily played upon. By-the-way, to-morrow his statue will, for the first time, be exhibited. Come.

WILT. A statue of Nash!

DERB. Aye, erected in the pump-room by the mayor and aldermen; who, with corporation taste, place the figure between the busts of Newton and Pope.

WILT. Impossible! The corporation cannot so offend philosophy and wit.

DERB. Why, in this case, the corporation reverse the common rule, and use no ceremony with strangers. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.

NASH'S *Apartments, shewily furnished.* NASH *discovered, holding his morning levee.* BATHOS, TWANG, SKILLET, MONSIEUR PAS, TRADESMEN, &c. *in attendance.* CASKET *waiting.*

NASH. (*Reading paper.*) "To Richard Nash, Esq., on his sickness at Tunbridge." Foregad, Mr. Bathos! I have been drenched with verse.

BATH. If your honour would mark the nerve in the last line,—

NASH. I see. (*Reads.*)

> "Come then, kind health,—O, quickly come away;
> Bid Nash revive, and all the world be gay."

"All the world be gay." Ha! there's spice in that.

BATH. I knew your honour would like the last line.

NASH. I always prefer your last line. "Sickness at Tunbridge?" Bathos, isn't the subject somewhat flat? I have been well these three months.

BATH. That's unlucky—for my verse. Perhaps, on a future illness,—

NASH. Bathos, (*aside to him*) you have heard of the statue to-morrow? Now, if a handful of verses on the subject were found,—

BATH. They shall be done.—I'll delight your honour with—

NASH. Me! I desire you don't imagine I care for praise: 'tis merely to please the people. For myself, I hope I am above these things: too high to snuff vulgar incense. (*To* SKILLET.) What are you?—

SKILL. My lord, my new book of cookery, dedicated to your worship; I—

NASH. (*To* TWANG.) And you?

TWANG. My last new air, your worship's honour; the "Bath Waters." If,—

NASH. (*To* PAS.) And you?

PAS. *Milord, le menuet, le menuet que,*—

NASH. The cookery book will do; 'tis promoted to my kitchen. (*To* CASK.) See that the "Bath Waters" be played on my own French horns. For the minuet, (*to* PAS) run not stark mad with pride, if I dance the minuet myself. No words: Casket, clear the rooms. (CASKET *shews them out.*) Yes; 'twill be a glorious day; a triumphant day.

Re-enter CASKET, *shewing in* ALDERMAN BEETLE.

CASK. Alderman Beetle. (*Exit.*)

BEET. I could hardly fight my way to the door.—Such a crowd of rascals!

NASH. Ha, Alderman! I had better been born to a pick-axe than a fine taste.

BEET. It must be dreadful. Well, Belinda has promised to come and see your house; has promised her judgment on your new arrangements: and, by my honour, they're magnificent. But, to the great point. Wilt make Belinda a happy woman?

NASH. I can't.

BEET. What prevents it?

NASH. Our parish registers. I'm sixty-five; she's not one-and-twenty.

BERT. Tut! you may live these thirty years.

NASH. All the worse for the lady.

BERT. Wilt see her sacrificed to that spendthrift, Derby?

NASH. Now, don't appeal to my compassion.

BERT. An abandoned—

NASH. If you proceed, she's lost. I must marry her.

BERT. Let's strike hands; 'tis a match then?

Enter CASKET.

CASK. Mr. Powel's man. He comes for, I think he says, a—a play; he insists 'tis your honour's play.

BATH. Hast written a play? Satirical, I warrant?

NASH. (*To* CASK.) That packet. (CASK. *brings papers to* NASH). Confusion take me, alderman, but I think there's here will make 'em wince.

BERT. Mind; you must cure as well as cut.

NASH. Never fear.—The play is like the leaf that Doctor Cheney talks of,—one side a blister, the other a salve. Blockhead! What have you brought me? These are the duchess's letters: put them next the countess's; with the packet from Mr. Pope. (CASK *brings MS.*) So: here's the play. There's not a little, I think, in the name?

BERT. (*Reading.*) "Punch in Boots; or, the Prince of Morocco and the Lady of the White Apron." A hit, indeed, at the boors and sluts. But Mr. Powel's man? Is the play to be played by the puppets? Why not give it to the actors?

NASH. Oh, poor rogues! Punch is far more popular. (*Giving MS. to* CASK.) Tell him to study the parts; and to let me see the new speaker who is to play the lover.

(*Exit* CASKET.) Yes; 'twill work a marvellous reformation.

BEET. No doubt. But, my dear friend, it is a match? That reprobate Derby,—

NASH. May be reclaimed. No, ruin seize me! I wouldn't break the young dog's heart,—I—

(*Enter* CASKET.)

Well?

CASK. Mr. Baxter.

BEET. Baxter! No, it can't be a fellow called Jack Baxter—a sharper of Tunbridge, of whom I have heard tricks that—

NASH. Alderman Beetle, Mr. Baxter—(*Aside.*) the devil take him!—is a gentleman who,—in fact, Mr. Baxter is not Jack Baxter from Tunbridge. His family is—

BEET. Not the Baxters of Staffordshire?

NASH. The—the—same.

BEET. His uncle, Lord Fog and myself, were close as brothers. (*To* CASKET.) Pray, shew him up. (*Exit* CASKET.)

NASH. (*Aside*) Shall I trust the alderman with my secret? Shall—no, 'twould spoil all. Here comes Jack. His impudence amounts to genius.

Enter JACK BAXTER.

BAXT. Your servant, Squire Nash: your very particular servant.

BEET. (*Aside to* NASH.) Egad! there's a great family likeness. Do introduce me.

NASH. Mr. Baxter,—Alderman Beetle, a magistrate. You *ought* to be better acquainted.

BAXT. A magistrate?

BEET. Ha, sir! I knew several of your family.

BAXT. Indeed, sir?

BEET. Yes, sir; your's is not a genealogy of yesterday. Your's is an ancient tree.

NASH. (*Aside*) As ancient, to a day, as the gallows.

BEET. You are no mushrooms. You are not of a family who come up one hour, and are cut down the next.

NASH. (*Aside*). Yet hath that very accident occurred to several of its members.

BEET. I knew your uncle well, sir; intimate with him up to the hour of his elevation.

BAXT. (*Aside.*) Sheriff, that year, I suppose?

BEET. But when he went to the upper house,—

NASH. Then, of course, there was an end to the acquaintance.

BEET. (*To* NASH.) You must recollect some of his speeches?

NASH. I recollect his last perfectly.

BAXT. (*Aside.*) I don't half like this. Well, alderman, for the misfortune of my uncle,—

BEET. Misfortune! I hope to see his nephew meet with the same reward.

NASH. And from my knowledge of his merits, I may venture to promise that enjoyment. (*Aside to* BAXT.) He thinks you respectable. Humour the joke.

BAXT. Alderman, I seize your friendship. Pretty place, this Bath.

BEET. Ah, Mr. Baxter! we owe much to our friend here. To-morrow we pay a small part of the debt. To-morrow we exhibit the statue.

NASH. Don't name it; these honours are plaguey heavy matters. I pray Atlas, I mayn't sink under 'em. Look here, now. (*Displaying brilliant snuff-box.*)

BEET. Splendid, indeed!

NASH. The thirteenth, sent me within this week. Foregad! I ought to be Briareus with a hundred noses. Alderman, I must beg your mercy.

BEET. Certainly. Yet, Belinda; wilt see her?

NASH. I'll call, in my drive.

BEET. And, perhaps, she may be induced to view the house to-day. (*To* BAXTER.) Sir, I hope for your esteem.

BAXT. You shall have it, Alderman. Jack Baxter never—

BEET. Jack Baxter! Is your name Jack Baxter?

NASH. Yes; John Baxter. It is—(*aside to* BEETLE)—ha! ha! an odd coincidence.

BEET. (*Aside to* NASH.) The name startled me; but not a word. Mr. Baxter, I am charmed to renew my friendship with your ancient and honourable family. (*Aside to* NASH.) Remember—Belinda. (*Exit.*)

NASH. Jack Baxter; for the last five minutes you have been thought a reputable person. Don't presume on the weakness of an alderman;—you are not.

BAXT. Reputable! Hav'n't I given up play on my own account to peach other rogues?—Left my old friends, to be your spy at the tables? Besides, to prove my reformation, I do think I shall some day print my life. I've brought it to shew your honour. (*Producing papers.*)

NASH. Your life!

BAXT. And with your worship's goodness, addressed to your honour, as a warning to all rogues.

NASH. (*Taking the MS.*) First let me consider whether I'm a sufficient patron for so numerous a body. (*Reads the MS.*) "The discoveries of John Poulter, alias Baxter"—

"surprising tricks"—"frauds"—humph! "Written wholly by himself."

BAXT. No trick there, your honour, I'd despise it. You see, I am getting on, but virtue's a work of time, sir: you can't raise a character like a salad.

NASH. No; and especially after the first crop. Salad! Hempseed, knave. Go; I have now no time to hear your news of last night; call again. I may have another trial for your sprouting virtue, Jack Baxter. (*Exeunt severally.*)

SCENE III.

An Apartment in the House of ALDERMAN BEETLE.

Enter SLIPPER *and* CLAPTRAP.

SLIPP. Give me a lover like Mr. Derby; no cat can outwatch him. The alderman's carriage had hardly rolled from the door, than here, punctual to the letter, the dear man hurried with a mouthful of the sweetest oaths to my lady. Now, you, Mr. Claptrap,—

CLAPT. I know my flaw—I never could swear sweetly in my life. And then the puppets have taught me to look on love as a foolish matter.

SLIPP. Puppets! Why puppets ar'n't flesh and blood.

CLAPT. No; but when love's in the case, flesh and blood are puppets. Love! 'tis an old, worn-out story—nothing new can be said of it.

SLIPP. But suppose Mr. Derby and my lady are now determined to marry?

CLAPT. 'Tis a proof they have worn it out, too. When

people have said all they can about love, they take marriage as a resource from idleness. (*Knocking without.*)

SLIPP. (*Looking out.*) As I live, there's the alderman! So soon come back,—and with him a strange gentleman! What's to be done with Mr. Derby?

Enter BELINDA, *from inner room.*

BEL. Oh, Slipper! if you have no scheme to preserve us' we are lost. Poor Derby—

CLAPT. 'Tis a bright thought. He's saved: I promise the protection of "The Prince of Morocco." Here he is. (*Shewing MS.*)

SLIPP. What can the man mean?

CLAPT. "The Prince of Morocco and the Lady of the White Apron." 'Tis our new play, writ by Squire Nash. Mark a few of the directions. (*Reads.*) "The Prince, having thrown his wife out of window, goeth tranquilly to bed in his boots."

SLIPP. Just like the sex.

BEL. But Mr. Derby,—

CLAPT. Whilst I read, let Slipper sneak him out. Hush! the alderman.—(*Affecting repugnance to read.*) No, madam, no; it is impossible—

(*Enter* BEETLE *and* BAXTER *at back.*)

—I dare not continue the play. Be satisfied; I can't proceed.

SLIPP. Only a little more. Now, go on: you left the prince in bed in his boots.

BEET. And there let the prince lie. What mumming is this?

CLAPT. Mumming, alderman? 'Tis a play—a legitimate play. I act the prince.

BEET. Varlet! I'll have your princeship whipped.

CLAPT. Whipped! Would you violate the unities?

BEET. Who are you—whence come you—what do you here?

CLAPT. I am second to Mr. Powel—I came from Squire Nash—I was reading a scene of his new play.

BEL. The fault is mine, uncle. I was curious to hear the production of so bright a pen. You know, I dearly love all plays.

CLAPT. Caution—never confess it: 'tis enough to ruin you with people of wit.

BEL. Indeed?

CLAPT. Surely. If you'd pass for somebody, you must sneer at a play, but idolize Punch. I know the most refined folks, who'd not budge a foot to hear Garrick, would give a guinea each, nay, mob for a whole morning, to see a Greenlander eat seal's-flesh and swallow whale oil. But if you'll not betray me to Squire Nash, and the alderman will listen?—

BEET. Pshaw! Belinda, Mr. Baxter; the nephew of my old friend, Lord Fog. (*To him, aside.*) What dost think of my niece?

BAXT. Twice an angel by my life! Madam, I am your most profound adorer.

BEL. Already, sir?

BAXT. Already, ma'am. There is a something in divine woman, ma'am, that—that is so great a something, because the tongue of man, ma'am, cannot clearly tell what that something is ma'am. I say,—I feel it is that something,—

BEL. Sir, I understand you, perfectly.

CLAPT. (*Aside to her.*) 'Tis the shortest way, be sure of it

BEET. (*Aside.*) How like his uncle! 'Twas lucky, I again met him; for if Nash still dally, egad, I'll secure her

from Derby, by marrying her to Mr. Baxter. Of course, you see the ceremony to-morrow,—that is, the statue of our master, Nash?

BAXT. My birds won't let me; can't neglect 'em, they fight to-morrow. Got a match with Lord Steelspur and Whitefeather: such a main of cocks. You *(to* BELINDA) never saw my birds?

BEL. Are they so brilliant?

BAXT. They'd make your eyes ache to look at 'em. Brilliant! they've combs like coral; bills like coals; legs like steel; feet, yellow as guinea-gold; and nails at the end of 'em, white, long and sharp as your ladyship's.

BEL. Indeed.

BAXT. True: after this, I needn't tell you how they'll fight. And then, to hear 'em crow,—they crow like— *(French horns heard without.)*

BEET. Mischief take it! isn't that his honour?

CLAPT. *(Looking out.)* Yes, Squire Nash; horns and all. His four greys have new harness—his postillions new liveries—his footmen,—

BAXT. *(To* BEET.) The Squire may want some private talk—I'll take my leave. (*Aside.*) Wouldn't meet him for a rouleau.

BEET. (*Aside.*) He mus'n't see him, or he might suppose —Will you step into that room, Mr. Baxter?

BEL. Uncle! my room?

BEET. But an instant. Should his honour—you understand—see you, a suspicion might—

BEL. Suspicion, sir?—suspicion?

BEET. I insist. In that room, sir. Slipper—a word—come you with me. (*To* CLAPT.) Sirrah, stay you here. (*Exit* BEET., SLIPP. *following.*)

BAXT. Aye, ma'am; we'll talk in this room.

CLAPT. (*Placing himself before door.*) Certainly not: 'tis already occupied.

BAXT. By whom?

CLAPT. My assistant: he is now studying with the puppets, a tyrant for our new play. I warn you to respect his indignation.

BAXT. Let me pass: I promise your tyrant all respect.

CLAPT. Nay, once passed, respect for the tyrant would be impossible.

BAXT. Why?

CLAPT. You'd see his wires.

BAXT. (*Aside.*) I hear them coming. Stand away: I will see your man—I will see—

(*Enter* DERBY *from room in scene.*)

Mr. Derby!

DERBY. Jack Baxter!

BEL. I am so confused—you know Mr. Baxter? knew, probably, his uncle, the Alderman's friend,—Lord—Lord,—

BAXT. Lord Fog.

DERB. Really I was ignorant that Jack Baxter was nephew to a lord.

BAXT. Nor did I believe Mr. Derby under-journeyman to the master of the puppets.

DERB. For the present, let us hold our new characters. Jack, for one minute, take my place.

CLAPT. This way, sir: our mystery being saved, the profane may enter.

BAXT. (*Aside.*) So! a match—clear as sixes. (*Exit into room.*)

DERB. Now, Belinda; at once quit this sorry game of hide-and-seek, and boldly take up marriage.

BEL. Marriage seems my destiny; for in me behold the future queen of Bath. Did ye not hear his majesty's arrival?

DERB. What! Nash? Ha! ha! By Vulcan, he brings most ominous music.

CLAPT. Hark! the alderman and his honour.

BEL. To your hiding-place, Derby.

DERB. First promise,—

BEL. What should I promise?

DERB. That to-night—to-night,—

BEL. To-night will come: but now, I promise nothing. Hide, hide, and trust. (*Exit* DERBY *into room.*) Where's Slipper?

CLAPT. Carried off by the alderman. Only engage them, and I'll steal Derby out.

Enter BEETLE, NASH, *and* SLIPPER.

BEET. This is, indeed, kind; on the eve of such a day to visit us.

NASH. What are triumphs, Alderman, (*to* BELINDA) unless shared with those we love?

BEL. A sentiment worthy a conqueror.

NASH. Foregad! Jupiter himself with all his thunderbolts, had been but a dull lump of dignity without a queen. I—I have felt this; feel it, now.

BEL. What, sir, do not even your honours?—

NASH. Honour, madam, is like wine; not to be truly enjoyed alone. Could I prevail on a certain lip to taste,—

BEL. Lud! my head swims to think of it.

NASH. (*Aside.*) To own the truth—so does mine. A cup of bliss—a draught of nectar,—a—(*seeing* CLAPTRAP)—what brought you here?

BEL. 'Twas obedience to my summons. I had tidings of

your play, and—forgive my woman's curiosity—couldn't rest till I heard it. 'Tis beautiful.

NASH. What! 'twill do?

BEL. The play has but one fault.

NASH. I know the blot; 'tis its simplicity.

BEET. I've heard—(*aside to* SLIPPER) remember my orders—I've heard you call simplicity a classic excellence.

NASH. True; a classic excellence, but not a modern advantage. No; I'm told—for I never go to a play—that nothing is so marketable as a complex seduction, wound up with an elaborate suicide. A good murder is now the very life of a drama. Thus, if a playwright would fill his purse, he should take a hint from the sugar-bakers, and always refine his commodity with blood.

BEET. Pray, delight us with a scene; and then, Belinda will promise to see your house. (*Aside to* SLIPPER.) Get Mr. Baxter down stairs.

BEL. It must be a love-scene, then; above all things, a love-scene.—(*Aside to* CLAPTRAP.) Make sure of Derby's escape.

BEET. (*Aside to* NASH.)—Mark that,—a love-scene. (*To* SLIPPER *aside.*) Now, then; I'll cover his retreat. (*They sit.*)

BEL. Well, sir; enter a bleeding heart.

NASH. Hem! (*Reading MS.*) "Scene the third." This I think ingenious: the lovers being surprised, the hero is crammed into a clothes-press. His rival enters, attended by the gaoler of the heroine. Here ensues a dialogue full of wit.

BEET. Now for the foils.

BEL. I'm dying for the dialogue.

NASH. Here's a blank. As I wish this scene to be particularly brilliant, I've left it to the extempore genius of the

actors. After the talk, the heroine sings an Italian canzonet.

BEL. There's the one fault. Is there sufficient English in the play?

NASH. Fault! 'tis its one beauty. Nothing was ever writ in English, that wouldn't have been finer in something else. Look at even Milton. Isn't Milton's meaning too heavy for English?—Like a giant walking on a skylight, doesn't he every minute threaten to fall through?

BEET. But all this time, your hero's in the clothes-press.

NASH. See you the skill that gets him off. After the song, the rival pleads his suit—the gaoler looking on. Madam, imagine the Alderman the gaoler—yourself the cruel fair—and me—

BEL. What can I possibly imagine you?

NASH. Your passionate adorer. Now comes the incident with the white apron. You must suppose me on my knee.—

BEL. Nay, I have the most sluggish fancy. I never could suppose such condescension.

NASH. Behold! (*kneels.*) Now, mark the directions. The gaoler—get up, Alderman—stands musing, apart. I tenderly press your hand—whilst the concealed lover—

BEL. What of him?

NASH. By means of a confederate, escapes.

BEL. What! you and the gaoler looking on?

NASH. No; for you drop your white apron—I hasten to restore it—you fall into my arms, seemingly overcome by my devotion—whilst the confederate seizes the gaoler—and with a dagger at his throat holds him to the spot!

(DERBY *and* BAXTER *appear with* SLIPPER *at the door.*)

BEET. And is all this practicable?

NASH. What more easy? (*gives MS. to* CLAPTRAP.) See,

ma'am—I am on my knee—I press your hand—you drop the apron—(BELINDA *lets handkerchief fall*) bravo!—I restore it—excellent—you faint—(*as* NASH *is about to return her the handkerchief, she sinks on his shoulder;* CLAPTRAP *seizes the Alderman, holding the MS. at his throat, when* DERBY *and* BAXTER *run off.*)

SLIPP. (*Aside to* BELINDA.) He's safe!

CLAPT. (*Aside to* BEETLE.) He's gone!

NASH. Capital! Bravo! bravo!

BEET. Excellent! excellent!

END OF ACT I.



ACT II.—SCENE I.

NASH'S *Apartments.*

Enter BELINDA *and* SLIPPER.

SLIPP. And now, ma'am, to take a peep at his honour's cabinet.

BEL. No: lock the doors. I've seen enough.

SLIPP. Enough, ma'am! When he has left you the keys to view all over the house? And isn't it fine?

BEL. As a Chinese lanthorn.

SLIPP. The hangings, and curtains, chosen with so just a taste!

BEL. So impartial, certainly; for no one colour has been neglected. Come, Slipper; we'll not wait for Mr. Nash's return.

SLIPP. Dear ma'am, the squire and alderman were suddenly sent for by the mayor: it may be state matters that detain them. Do first rummage his honour's cabinet of curiosities.

BEL. Well, but a glance: for his honour being absent, the cabinet loses its crowning wonder.

SLIPP. Lud! I'd forgotten to lock the pink room. I'll join you, directly, my lady. (*Exit* BELINDA *into cabinet.*) Now, if I can but see dear Mr. Casket! (*Exit.*)

Enter CLAPTRAP *and* CASKET.

CLAPT. The squire not within,—when I heard at Alderman Beetle's, that the lady Belinda and her uncle were here to view the mansion?

CASK. A despatch from the mayor called his honour out; the alderman went with him, and the ladies returned home.

CLAPT. Ladies?—

CASK. Madam Belinda and Mrs. Slipper. (*Aside.*) He mus'n't know the maid is here: 'twould spoil our tête-à-tête. Is your business particular?

CLAPT. Momentous. The gentleman below is the new actor for Squire Nash's play.

CASK. The actor may call again. For my part, I only trust his honour's character mayn't be blown; but when a man of breeding stoops to write plays, his friends may tremble for his reputation.

CLAPT. Many examples declare that truth.

CASK. A gentleman may pen a charade—or a riddle, and no harm done. But to drudge at a play,—

CLAPT. Be pacified; between us, the squire's play is the darkest riddle ever guessed at.

CASK. Is it so? Then there's hope. I wouldn't leave his honour for a bagatelle; no, confound me! But there's no living with a man who writes plays.

CLAPT. I'm afraid not; or poor living at the best.

CASK. I couldn't take his wages; no, damn a play!

CLAPT. Nay, you might take his wages, and help to damn his play, too.

CASK. Ha! ha! very true: I shall treasure the hint for self-defence. (*Aside.*) And now to finish my perjury to Mrs. Slipper. (*Exit.*)

CLAPT. I knew Nash and the alderman were away, but for the women—

Enter DERBY.

DERB Where's the lady?

CLAPT. Gone, sir; gone, whilst I ran to tell you Nash was called from home.

DERB. Mischief! I am resolved to carry her off to-night, and wanted but this interview to win her to the scheme. For this, I have ventured into the lion's den.

CLAPT. And with true romantic courage, being first assured that the lion was out.—If you're still for heroic peril, you'll stay and view his majesty's palace: if for shameful safety, you'll follow me. (*Exit.*)

DERB. Palace! 'Tis a hall for harlequin. Could I but have seen her! for what with the press and hurry of to-night, the vigilance of her uncle, and—no, there's no way but to write a line, convey it to her in the rooms—Write! here's pen and ink: time presses—now, ha! ha! out of pure bravado will I indict my brief epistle here. (*Sits at table writing.*) "I have considered every thing, and am determined on instant marriage."

(*Enter Mrs.* CORAL.)

(*Writing.*) "Let us to-night defy all future accident."

MRS. C. (*Aside.*) This must be his honour's gentleman! the secretary, no doubt.—Sir.

DERB. Ma'am! (*Aside.*) What simple antique is this?

MRS. C. I wished to see Squire Nash; but since he's from home, perhaps, Mr. Secretary, you'll be just as good.

DERB. Secretary!

MRS. C. I was told I should find his honour's gentleman —if you're not the secretary,—

DERB. Yes, yes. (*Aside.*) I'll fall in with this.—Perfectly right: I am the secretary—you see I was just writing for his honour. A stranger, I presume, to our city?

MRS. C. Yes, sir; myself and my niece Louisa arrived

last night. Alack! that we ever came! for we are ruined past hope.

DERB. What has befallen the fair Louisa?

MRS. C. Ruin, sir; though she doesn't know it. A year ago, she was cheerful as the day; then she pined and changed; till at last the doctors said her only hope was at Bath. And so, sir, we somehow got together twenty guineas, in a kid-skin purse,—but, Mr. Secretary, may I trust you?—

DERB. Assure yourself: I am already interested for your charming niece.

MRS. C. Well, sir, all the money—with a little ring which Louisa prizes beyond gold—was taken from my pocket on our way from Bristol.

DERB. And on this accident, you came to consult Mr. Nash?

MRS. C. Why, sir, I've heard my brother talk so much of the Squire—he's his fellow-townsman—and knowing nobody here, and being well-nigh beside myself,—

DERB. You were right to wait upon his honour. Doubt not, he will find means to restore your loss.

MRS. C. May I hope so?

DERB. Calm yourself: nothing escapes his vigilance: ere this he may know of the accident.

MRS. C. If I could but think so! For the dear child—

(BELINDA *is coming from room in scene. Pauses on seeing* DERBY.)

DERB. Nay, rely on me. Louisa shall be my immediate care.

BEL. *(Aside.)* Louisa! his care!

DERB. In a brief time, I will convince you of the truth of my professions.

BEL. *(Aside.)* My uncle was right. A false libertine!

MRS. C. But you'll be secret? For I am a born gentlewoman, sir; and Louisa is no less,—you'll be secret?

DERB. Trust my honour—my prudence.

BEL. *(Aside.)* No doubt—no doubt. The traitor!

MRS. C. And, sir, we may hope to hear from you?—Here, sir, is my address.

DERB. *(Reading card.)* "Mrs. Coral,—Westgate-street." I will lose no instant to assure you how sincerely I sympathize with the beautiful Louisa.

BEL. *(Aside.)* Westgate-street!—The beautiful Louisa!

MRS. C. That we should find such a friend! Good-day, sir; you'll be sure to be—

DERB. Discreet as vigilant. (*Shows off* MRS. C.) Now, is my prying rightly served! I thought to worm some curious secret—to have a laugh at Nash; and—

(BELINDA *comes down.*)

Belinda! They told me you had left the house?

BEL. True; but on second thoughts, I felt 'twas right I should carefully view the place. It is—

DERB. A raree-show well worth one peep. And now, Belinda, my heart is—

BEL. Very handsome; and yet I spy new improvements. Now, in the parlour, there's—

DERB. I say, my heart, Belinda, is—

BEL. A worn-out fire-screen, hideously painted.—

DERB. Belinda,—wilt listen to?—

BEL. There!—I could hear it all day.

DERB. And I could all day speak, my love.

BEL. The sound is so musical—so natural.—

DERB. Nay, thou'lt make me a coxcomb.

BEL. And then the beautiful little Dutchman!—

DERB. Why, what has a little Dutchman to do with my love?

BEL. Your love! La! I mean—there! I mean the eight-day cuckoo-clock on the stair-case.

DERB. Belinda!

BEL. Is it true that the little Hollander on the dial-plate to mark the time of winding-up, knocks down only one skettle per day?

DERB. Really, 'tis a compliment to Dutch vivacity I cannot certify. I cry a truce, Belinda! Our love is now too serious to let us tilt with words.

BEL. *(Aside.)* The hypocrite!

DERB. I cannot be content with the vague promise of this morning. I have followed you to declare my plans, to—

Enter CLAPTRAP.

CLAPT. Run, sir; run—eh! madam, here?—

DERB. Is Nash come back?

CLAPT. The lion is now mounting the staircase. Fly, if you would not be devoured. (*Aside.*) The lady here,—the maid must be at hand. Ha! the valet—I scent infidelity. (*Exit.*)

BEL. If he find us together, your plan—however subtle—must be defeated. Let me be safe from the house; then, escape as best you may. Till then, step into his cabinet, (*aside*) where you may hear and profit.

DERB. (*Aside.*) Luckily the old dame's story may excuse my visit.

BEL. Hide—hide and listen; (*aside*) for now, comes my cue to teaze. (DERBY *goes into the cabinet.*)

Enter NASH *and* BEETLE.

NASH. Plague on business! plague on honours! Madam,

can I be forgiven? Look yes; for absence, followed by frowns, were death with torment.

BEL. Absence! I vow, sir, I hav'n't for an instant missed you. How could I, when every object here presented the taste, the sentiment of the owner?

NASH. You think the hut—the hut is habitable?

BEL. I could live here all my days. 'Tis a fairy temple!

NASH. And if it were a ruin, you, like the pearl, must make the shell desirable, by dwelling in it. Hem!

BEL. Then the cabinet.—

NASH. Why, I must confess, there is something in the cabinet. But all that it contains—all is at your disposal.

BEL. What! the paintings—and—

NASH. Every touch of paint.

BEL. And the bronzes?—

NASH. And every ounce of bronze.

BEET. That is, Belinda, when you marry.

BEL. (*Aside to* BEETLE.) Oh! I don't forget the penalty. Well, if the world would not say I was bought,—

NASH. Bought!

BEL. Aye,—a marriage effected by such things,—

NASH. Nay, matches *are* brought about by mere paintings, and by mere bronze.

BEET. Then why hesitate? Belinda, you consent?

BEL. The cabinet has its attractions,—

BEET. (*To* NASH.) I wish you joy.

NASH. Humph! shouldn't you rather compliment the furniture?

BEET. (*Aside to* NASH.) Oh! 'tis her giddiness. You'll give me your promise—your written promise?

NASH. I'll consider it.

BEET. Come, Belinda.

(*Enter* SLIPPER.)

Slipper! what's the matter?

SLIPP. Nothing, sir: I had forgotten to lock a door, sir; and (*aside.*) that impertinent Mr. Claptrap!—as his honour gave us charge of the keys—(*aside.*)—I'm so fluttered,—and as madam's going, I'll lock the cabinet. (*Runs to cabinet-door; screams, and suddenly closes it.*)

NASH. How now?

SLIPP. (*Aside.*) Mr. Derby! Oh, sir! nothing, sir. Your picture!—

NASH. What's in my picture that a woman should scream at it?

SLIPP. It's so like life, sir. I mean, sir—just then, it so resembled my dear grandfather; that is, sir, as the light fell, sir, I could have vowed it—it winked at me.

NASH. Wink at *you*? Young woman, even pictures have reputations.—(*Locks the cabinet-door, and takes the key.*)

BEL. (*Aside.*) Now, am I more than revenged! Aye, sir; secure the key: for if what's locked up be in truth so animated, I may fear some rival.

NASH. Never! or let me die that day.

BEL. You'll give the key, now, to some other lady?

NASH. Not to Venus on her bended knees.

BEL. May I believe it, for indeed, indeed, and spite of all disguise, I am mightily taken with the very object that—that startled Slipper.

NASH. Oh, spare me! a poor thing!

BEL. Heigho! I could wish to be in its company for ever.

NASH. Then, you do admire it?

BEL. The vivacity—the expression—the fire,—

NASH. Why, it is like—it is like. And since the object

finds favour in your eyes, I'll treasure it (*putting key in pocket*) for them alone.

BEL. Come, Slipper. (*Aside to her.*) Hush! I know all. (*To* NASH.) I trust your faith, now?

NASH. The arrow's in my heart: I swear and bleed.

BEL. (*Aside.*) And now, to visit the beautiful Louisa. (*Exeunt* BEL. *and* SLIPP.)

NASH. (*To* BEET.) What a taste she has for the fine arts!

BEET. Her taste's infallible. And now, your promise; a line or two will serve; but, to-night, just to humour me, I must have your written promise. (*Exit.*)

NASH. A written promise! Can she have really forgotten that spark, and can she really admire me? I'm sixty-five. What of it? All people ar'n't agreed in their choice of seasons; some admire spring: the more judicious prefer autumn. I may live to see my eldest son a—humph!—what shall he be? Judge—bishop—physician?

(*Enter* JACK BAXTER.)

Now, if my son's a judge,—if he should reach the bench,—

BAXT. I hope, your honour, he wouldn't forget his father's friends at the bar?

NASH. Nay, Jack Baxter, no matter who may sentence, thou art safe from neglect.

BAXT. Sentence! Oh, your honour, I'm returning to respectability. I was a careless rogue, but now—

NASH. You're a painstaking spy. 'Tis a great backward jump; a few more such leaps, and you're at your journey's end.

BAXT. And yet the hindrances thrown in my way! There's that Lavender Tom, the marquis as he's called, and Dropper, my old friends,—they're now in Bath, fine as lords.

NASH. At whose cost?

BAXT. They've been lecturing at Tunbridge and Bristol. Ah, sir! for a man just warming up to virtue, to look at their laced coats—its quite affecting.

NASH. I acknowledge your struggles. But, take comfort: you may one day see them both at Tyburn.

BAXT. Oh, sir! I always hope the best. Still, I want to be quite at ease in my mind. I want to put a solemn question.

NASH. So! A case of conscience! What disturbs you, Jack.

BAXT. You see, your honour, I'm nine-and-thirty—I've looked keenly on the world—and before I can take kindly to a new life,—I want seriously to ask you—seeing how some fortunes are made, and how some who make 'em live and prosper,—I want to ask you, if you do really think it wrong to pick a pocket?

NASH. In truth, Jack, the question is one for the moralities; but, unfortunately, 'tis generally settled by the hangman. So, 'tis safer, perhaps, to watch your friends, than labour with them. They know nothing of your conversion?

BAXT. They must suspect something.

NASH. How can they imagine you are become honest?

BAXT. My wardrobe's growing shabby.

NASH. Never fear: thou hast those certain signs of a great man,—a face and air that defy the tailor. Wert thou in a hermit's gown and hood—Newgate, pure Newgate, would peep from under it. Business: were your late friends communicative.

BAXT. No; we only had one fling together, for old acquaintance sake; we scorned to play for money. I won this bit of an old fashioned ring of Dropper.

NASH. With initials, "H. W." in black hair. It may be

inquired for. I'll place it with other suspected toys in my cabinet. (*Goes to cabinet: unlocks the door; pauses and comes down.* DERBY *comes from the cabinet, and waits behind* NASH *and* BAXTER.) Stay, who was at the tables last night?

BAXT. Hardly an elbow stirring. Mr. Derby and I had a little hazard. Isn't he a fine gentleman?

NASH. The finer the goose, the better the plucking.

BAXT. That maxim, your honour, deserves letters of gold. Still, must Mr. Derby be ruined? Sometimes—for I've a little liking for him—I feel about me a sort of fluttering pity; then I hardly know what to do.

NASH. No! Rattle the dice; and pity will fly away directly.

DERB. (*Aside*) So! a most knowing teacher.

BAXT. There's the devil in the bones, to be sure. Yet, your worship, when compassion,—

NASH. Jack Baxter; plain words for plain things. I retained you as spy and sharper, that is, as a rascal: if you're getting above your business, say so, and our bargain's up.

BAXT. Oh! your honour, I hope I know my place.

NASH. Then don't press beyond it. Virtue, like gold lace, should be the privileged wear of your betters: now, as you can't afford the real thing, you must make what shew you can with copper washed.

BAXT. And as finery goes, your honour, a very good shew too.

NASH. For Mr. Derby, when I marry Madam Belinda,—

BAXT. Why, your honour, folks say she's to have Mr. Derby.

NASH. A profligate, abandoned coxcomb! No: happily, Belinda has taste. And when this hand is offered against

his, can there be any doubt which she much accept? Can there, I ask?

DERB. (*Thrusting his hand between them.*) Your judgment, Mr. Baxter?

NASH. Mr. Derby!

DERB. Come, your judgment? Is the hand of a gentleman as worthy in a lady's eye as that of a secret sharper,—a hand, as spotted as the dice it trades with? Your judgment, Mr. Baxter?

BAXT. Why, for hands—

NASH. (*To* DERBY.) Don't press him: for, rely on't, his verdict must be against you.

DERB. Well plotted, Richard Nash! Mr. Baxter, though grateful for your sympathies, permit me, henceforth, to avoid you. Well plotted! monarch and philanthropist: dealer in benevolence, founder of hospitals for the sick!

NASH. Nay more: I am about to build an asylum for the impertinent and the eaves-dropping; when 'tis up, I pray, command me.

DERB. Sir, 'twas accident made me a listener. I disdain secresy; as a gentleman, scorn disguise.

NASH. And your business in my house?—

DERB. 'Twas to plead for the distress of others. In ignorance, I intruded into your cabinet, when I found the door suddenly locked upon me; and as suddenly opened.

NASH. In my cabinet! (*Aside*) So; this was the picture that winked at the maid: and the mistress, too, owned that she was mightily taken with the same object. I begin to fear no son of mine will be lord chief justice.—(*To* DERBY.) And 'twas the distress of others put you in my cabinet?

DERB. Let this (*giving card*), with the brief story I shall

tell, convince you that mine was wholly a visit of charity—(*aside*) charity forgive me!

NASH. (*Reading card.*) Mrs. Coral, Westgate-street! Mrs. Coral!

Enter Mrs. CORAL.

MRS. C. (*Curtseying to* NASH.) At your service, sir. I heard from a young lady, you were come home, and fearing that your secretary, here, might forget—

NASH. Eh! secretary!

MRS. C. Isn't that your worship's secretary? To me he declared as much.

NASH. And he disdains secresy—as a gentleman, scorns disguise!

MRS. C. There could be no disguise: for he was at that table, writing, he said, for your worship—

(DERBY *makes for the table;* NASH *intercepts him, and snatches the paper left there by* DERBY.)

NASH. By your leave, secretary. Yes—(*Aside.*) I'll twit him, now—I had taken him on trial—given him a letter to write for me. Now, for a sample of the fellow's brains.—(*Reads.*) "My ever dear"—

DERB. "Belinda." 'Tis plain, sir; "My ever dear Belinda."

NASH. (*Aside.*) In my own house, too! (*Reads.*) "I have considered every thing, and am determined on instant marriage!"

MRS. C. I wish your worship joy, ten thousand times.

NASH. Thank'ee: (*Aside.*) I should need it.—(*Reads.*) "Let us defy—"

DERB. (*Snatching the paper from* NASH.) I perceive my style fails to delight, and so give up my too ambitious hopes.—(*To* MRS. C.) His worship will himself now satisfy

MRS. C. We're bound to bless you; for if we had lost the twenty guineas,—

NASH. Guineas!

MRS. C. The guineas that were with the ring, in the same purse.

NASH. Pray, what brings you to Bath?

MRS. C. To keep alive my niece. The doctors, sir, advised the journey; and Louisa's father—he's a poor curate, sir, at Swansea—with past savings and present borrowing, made up a sum to serve us here. We were robbed on our way from Bristol.

NASH. And whom do you suspect?

MRS. C. Nobody, sir; there were but two other passengers—and they had swords and ruffles; were, indeed, quite gentlemen.

NASH. Quite gentlemen!

MRS. C. One particularly; for he swore, I think, in French, besides, he talked of—of philosophy, and was called marquis!

NASH. (*Aside.*) The pebble-hearted ruffians! I see, I must be steward here.—(*Takes out purse.*)

MRS. C. (*Half aside.*) Lud! how happy such a load of gold would make us!

NASH. Would it? Your brother's a poor curate?—He borrowed money in the hope of saving his child?—of that money you have been robbed? Here is about double the amount; you say—I heard you—'twould make you happy. (*Placing purse in her hand.*) Be happy!

MRS. C. Your worship!

NASH. No words;—be happy.—

(*Enter* CASKET.)

So, sirrah,—wilt inform me what place is this? Tavern—coffee-house,—or what? Oblige me; tell me, where I am?

CASK. Is't not your honour's mansion?

NASH. I thought so; but I find it a public walk—a place to plot and lounge in. How came a stranger in my cabinet?

CASK. In truth, your honour, so long as you suffer players to visit you, I can be answerable for no plotting—no impertinence.

NASH. Players!

CASK. Here comes one—(*aside*). A spoil-sport rascal.

Enter CLAPTRAP.

NASH. (*To* CLAPTRAP.) My friend; I suspect, nay—more, I am pretty sure thou art a sort of—of clever rogue.

CLAPT. Oh, sir, only get the world of your mind, and my fortune's made.

NASH. You knew nothing of madam Belinda's being here—nothing of the man locked up in my cabinet?

CLAPT. Ha, sir! this it is to have business at a house, where the head servant wants character. Now, an innocent man may be doubted, when the bribe may have gone into the pocket of the valet.

CASK. Bribe! I apprehend the insinuation! Your worship, whoever was in the cabinet, was one of his fellows. Shall I count the snuff-boxes.

NASH. Then you did bring somebody here?

CLAPT. Certainly; the man to act the lover, (*aside*) that's no fable: the new player.

NASH. And where is he?

CASK. Aye, tell his honour, where is he?

NASH. If you brought the lover, where *is* the lover?

CLAPT. Where! (*Aside*) Ha! anybody for an escape. Where, sir?—there, sir! (*Pointing to* WILTON *as he enters.*)

MRS. C. (*Aside*) As I live, the young man who followed

Louisa. (*Aside to* NASH.) Sir, do you know who that person is?

NASH. (*Aside to her.*) To be sure: he is, or wishes to be, a lover.

MRS. C. And so he does. (*Aside.*) Wonderful man! he can tell every thing.

CLAPT. (*Aside to* WILTON.) That's his honour, sir; you couldn't have come in better season. (*Runs off.*)

WILT. If, sir, as I fear, I have ill-timed my visit, I trust —(*seeing* MRS. CORAL, *aside.*) Louisa's aunt! what miracle brings her to Bath!

NASH. (*Going up to him.*) My good man, I have heard enough: you'll not do.

WILT. Not do!

NASH. I'm sorry for it; but, no—you can't be accepted.

WILT. Accepted! why, sir, is it possible you are aware of my pretensions to—

NASH. To be sure; fully aware. And I say again,—you won't do.

MRS. C. (*Aside.*) Who could have told him?

WILT. (*Aside.*) Has he learnt this from the aunt? Is it quite clear, sir, that you can even now judge my qualifications?

NASH. If I can't—tell me who can? Quite clear; so clear, that I can see and hear at once, you hav'n't a single advantage.

MRS. C. (*Aside.*) I always said as much to Louisa.

WILT. Mr. Nash,—

NASH. I wish to be delicate; but I was certain, from the first glance—that you were dull as a tombstone.

WILT. Sir,—

NASH. And so far from my notion of what a lover ought

to be, that I'd as soon look for vivacity in a mummy—or for passion in an air-pump. Casket, show that person out. Ma'am (*to* MRS. CORAL,) I have a word to say about your niece. (*To* WILTON, *who is following.*) Young man, be satisfied—you won't do. (*Exit with* MRS. CORAL *into cabinet.*)

WILT. I would 'twere lawful to beat an old man in his own house! Won't do? Pshaw! I should rather laugh at his impertinence; for Louisa is doubtless here, and so—here may end my happy journey. (*Exit.*)

SCENE II.

A View of the Orange Grove. Enter DROPPER *and* LAVENDER TOM.

DROPP. I tell you, marquis, when a man turns thief and blackleg, he shouldn't trifle with time; he should never forget, that idleness is the root of evil.

TOM. Thief! *Mort de ma vie!* Dropper, your philosophy is damned gross.

DROPP. What's the difference, Tom—nice, Lavender Tom, for you've earned your name—twixt drawing a pocket with naked fingers, and with bits of pasteboard?

TOM. Immeasurable. All the difference between manual drudgery, and mental calculation.

DROPP. Then the physic for your conscience is—

TOM. Philosophy. I consider a hand of cards just an army of mercenaries; and when I play, believe myself no more than an Alexander—a Pompey—or a Julius Cæsar. That's true philosophy; *ou le diable m'emporte!*

DROPP. Scholarship has made you lazy and particular.

TOM. And given me besides philosophy, a fine taste.

DROPP. See what a man loses by taste. Whilst you were talking of heathen gods and goddesses to that girl from Swansea, I was industriously turning the penny.

TOM. *Comment?* How?

DROPP. I picked the old woman's pocket.

TOM. Barbarian! Vandal! Rob the fair—plunder the *beau sexe!*

DROPP. (*Showing purse.*) See; twenty guineas!

TOM. Pillage lovely woman! But, as 'tis done, halves!

DROPP. Halves! Is that like Pompey and Julius Cæsar?

TOM. Certainly; quite their philosophy. Halves.

DROPP. Well, as we're to share every thing—there,—(*gives him money in purse.*)

TOM. Dropper, 'twas a ruthless act; and yet, *par Dieu!* I spy its use. Yes; I shall first relieve, and then carry off.

DROPP. Pshaw! will you never learn—Eh!—here comes Jack Baxter.

TOM. Dropper, this being our first descent on Bath, let's hope we are unknown. Shun Baxter: he's a vulgar dog—inseparably of the *canaille.*

DROPP. Come, marquis, Jack Baxter's an open fellow.

TOM. So is Jack of Spades!

DROPP. A fellow from whom one gets good advice.

TOM. An insufferable monitor: he never comes near me, but I think I smell the odour of new hemp.

Enter BAXTER.

BAXT. So, Dropper! Tom, you look as blank as deuce-ace.

DROPP. Oh! Tom, like all great men, is free to have his leaden moments. But you are in haste, Jack?

BAXT. I have somebody to meet—(*aside*)—and somebody to miss.—(*Going—returns.*) Dropper, marquis, do you see that spark to the right? His name's Derby.

DROPP. Well?

BAXT. He haunts the tables—has money—and knows no more than a cherub.

DROPP. Art sure?

BAXT. I've tried and prospered; but as he's grown shy of me, like a man of honour, I give him up to my friends. Hook him, and hand him, (*aside*) and then, my proud ones, we hand you. (*Exit.*)

DROPP. Marquis, an easy prize!

TOM. (*Looking off.*) He certainly looks like one in a state of innocence. We'll now to the rooms: the women will, doubtless, be there; for I sent them tickets this morning. Dropper, your arm.

DROPP. To slight Jack, when he gives such intelligence!

TOM. Oh, learn of him all you can, and then,—shake him off.

DROPP. And isn't that ingratitude?

TOM. No: that is—philosophy. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.

The Assembly Rooms; the Stage represents a ball-room, filled with company. A minuet is concluded shortly after the scene opens. BELINDA, MRS. CORAL, LOUISA, DERBY, WILTON, LAVENDER TOM, *and* DROPPER *having in the interval, come on at various entrances.* NASH *presiding.* NASH *leads out* LOUISA *and* LAVENDER TOM.

WILT. (*Aside to* DERBY.) See! by all my hopes—there—led out by Nash—is Louisa.

NASH. The next minuet.

LOUIS. (*Seeing* WILTON.) Mr. Wilton!

NASH. Madam, suffer me to introduce,—(*About to introduce her to* LAVENDER TOM.)

LOUIS. Spare me, Sir; indeed I am suddenly unwell—I —(*Aside.*) Again, that odious man!

VISITORS. The master's minuet—the master's minuet!

NASH. Hush! Impossible.

LADY VISITORS. (*Crowding about* NASH.) Dear, Sir,—pray, delight us!

NASH. It cannot be—it is irregular.

1st LADY VISITOR. On the eve of such an event as the ceremony to-morrow, you cannot refuse.

NASH. Your grace, the laws of Bath, like the decrees of Lycurgus, are immutable.

2d LADY VISITOR. For once, violate a harsh statute.

NASH. My dear countess, it must not be.

3d LADY VISITOR. I'll turn rebel! ladies, your voices—the master's minuet!

All the ladies crowd about NASH; *and some, waving their handkerchiefs, others rapping with their fans, cry,—"The Master's Minuet!"*

NASH. I am vanquished. Musicians, my minuet!

DERB. (*Aside to* BELINDA.) Dearest Belinda—'Sdeath! here comes the alderman!—read this—(*giving her paper*)—and let a smile be your answer.

BELINDA *is about to read the paper, when* NASH *approaches her; she suddenly places it in the pocket of her apron.*

NASH. (*To* BELINDA.) Madam, the honour of your hand to walk a—(*Seeing apron.*)—what is that?

BEL. (*Aside.*) I knew 'twould startle him. What, Sir? an apron: white aprons are worn, are they not?

NASH. Yes, by waiting women. (*Plucks off the apron, and gives it to* BEETLE *as he comes down*)

BEL. Sir—(*Aside.*) The paper!

NASH. Alderman, I have fulfilled my duty: the further instruction of madam Belinda now rests with you. Musicians! (*Turns up the stage, taking* BELINDA.)

BEET. (*Aside.*) His duty—his—(*Paper falls out of apron: reads it.*) "I have considered every thing, and am determined on instant marriage." His written consent!

Music.—NASH *and* BELINDA *dance a minuet.*

BEET. (*To* NASH *and* BELINDA.) Joy—joy to both! and yet I—

NASH. No congratulations: business.—(*Aside.*) Did the old fool think I'd forgotten my dancing?

BEET. I was about to say—

NASH. (*Taking out watch.*) Eight o'clock. A country dance! Now to arrange partners with the learning of a garter king-at-arms.

NASH *places partners. The dance is commenced, and continued until the scene closes.*

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.—SCENE I.

NASH'S *Apartments.*

Enter CLAPTRAP *and* SLIPPER.

SLIPP. Well, but to suspect Mr. Casket!—

CLAPT. I allow, I didn't see him—I did'nt hear him. I'm willing to give up my eyes and ears; really, that ought to satisfy a moderate woman.

SLIPP. Ha, Mr. Claptrap! you know our easy sex; as you allow so much, I must forgive you. And now, I've a secret for you. The Alderman says 'Squire Nash has at last determined to marry madam Belinda. Would you have thought it of so old a gentleman?

CLAPT. Why, with some men, courage comes late. I think 'twill be my own case.

SLIPP. Surely?

CLAPT. Now I recollect, a gypsey—fortelling all my happy escapes—prophesied, I shouldn't marry till I was threescore.

SLIPP. Then you were to have escapes?

CLAPT. Yes; I was to be thrice nearly hanged—on false evidence; and thrice about to take a wife on no better testimony. Three times to escape the rope and the ring is to have great luck.

SLIPP. Wonderful, with such a face! Marry the first time at three-score! When my fortune was told, I was promised at sixty a third husband.

CLAPT. Oh, 'tis plain! we were paired at our birth.

SLIPP. La! Do you think so?

CLAPT. Certain; for, as the prophecy ran, I was to be a third husband.

SLIPP. What! at sixty?

CLAPT. At sixty. Fortune, in her mercy, has given me a long day. Now, for you, there's the valet to begin with.

SLIPP. No, Mr. Claptrap; as you say, we were paired; when I do marry, you shall be,—

CLAPT. Not the first; consider, you doat on me too much to think of surviving me; and I love you too fondly to give you any cause of mourning. No; I give place to Mr. Casket and the next gentleman. (*Going.*)

SLIPP. And will you leave me with—

CLAPT. You see, I have letters to take for his honour. Don't despair; we shall meet at sixty.

SLIPP. But Mr. Claptrap,—

CLAPT. Never consider me; I tell you—I can wait. (*Exit.*)

SLIPP. Wait! It's clear he has no more feeling than his own puppets. To accuse Mr. Casket—well, he really is a well-bred person: smiles, and bows, and never contradicts. To be sure, he's not so clever as Mr. Claptrap; then again, clever husbands are always brutes. If I could now see Mr. Caske,—lud! here comes his honour. (*Exit.*)

Enter NASH *and* BAXTER.

NASH. Jack, you have a liberal mind.

BAXT. Oh, your honour!—

NASH. For though a knave yourself, you refuse not applause to the roguery of others.

BAXT. The marquis is a genius, that's certain. Why, he makes the cards come to him, as though they loved him. It's a great gift.

NASH. Nay, allow the benefit of education. And so, Mr. Derby is wholly lost?

BAXT. Quite gone, sir. Last night, as I said, Tom somehow fastened upon him, and didn't leave him till he had coaxed him out of the thousands.

NASH. Ha! ha! Tom has thrown away much science: for young Derby is poorer than King Bladud, when he fed porkers here at Bath.

BAXT. But when his uncle dies, the young fellow comes to a round sum. And so, he's to give Tom a bond for the amount.

NASH. Oh! he's to give him a bond to be paid when the uncle dies?

BAXT. Yes, it's rather hard upon Tom.

NASH. Why, doubtless, ready money would be more acceptable. Still, the uncle is very old?—

BAXT. Yes; but, somehow, when people get to a certain age, further time seems lost upon 'em. I can't but say, it's hard upon Tom.

NASH. For once, I'll trade in life: I'll buy the deed. I owe the spark a turn, and the bond will put him in my power.

BAXT. Shall I tell the marquis, you'll deal with him?

NASH. No: he'd suspect some villainy—from the messenger. Pray, how did Tom contrive to cheat Mr. Derby?

BAXT. La, sir! you can't think what a gentleman Tom

is; he'd cheat any body. It puzzles me to tell where he got—what I call—his white satin manners.

NASH. Stole 'em, no doubt.

Enter CASKET.

CASK. Alderman Beetle.

NASH. Jack, wait in that room. (JACK *retires.*) Let Sam run to Mr. Derby's lodgings with this letter—this to Madam Belinda—this to Mr. Dropper, and these two, (*giving letters*) as directed. (*Exit* CASKET.)

(*Enter* BEETLE.)

So, alderman, out betimes: but 'tis a stirring day for all of us.

BEET. Right, friend; and so my words shall be few. Do you really love my niece?

NASH. I think I may say,—yes.

BEET. And you'll marry her?

NASH. I may venture to reply,—no.

BEET. And why not?

NASH. Because whenever I marry, I am determined not to find all the love myself. And I seriously think, if two people are to become the same flesh, it shouldn't happen when there's the slightest risk that one side may have the palsy.

BEET. You should have weighed this before.

NASH. Time enough: though sentence be passed, and I've the nosegay in my hand, the cart's not drawn away.

BEET. But, squire, when I've your written promise of marriage?—

NASH. Written! No—not a scratch.

BEET. I say, written; and your word to boot.

NASH. I don't deny my word—but I find the girl laughs at me, and I withdraw it. A man's in no danger as long as he talks his love, but to write it is to impale himself on his own pothooks.

BEET. And here (*shewing paper*) you are, writhing—writhing.

NASH. Phoo! this is young Derby's scrawl.

BEET. Derby's! how know you that?

NASH. He wrote it in this room; wrote it, like a fine, bold fellow, with my own pen and ink.

BEET. The impudent!—What, shoot at you with your own pinion?

NASH. Why, I mustn't own that; for he wrote with a goose-quill. And yet, why not? Confound me, I may say with the fellow in Chevy-chace—

> "The grey-goose wing that was thereon,
> In my heart's-blood was wet!"

Come, alderman, that's happy?

BEET. You cast off Belinda?

NASH. I'd cast off an empress, if I found she wanted to run away.

BEET. But your word,—forfeit your word! A likely hero for a statue.

NASH. Alderman, I care not to be one of those heroes who win statues by being stones themselves. I tell you, as I told you yesterday: Belinda is a fine, blooming creature, and I—I can say nothing worse for the match—I am sixty-five.

BEET. But your promise! A love of truth should compel you to the marriage.

NASH. 'Tis exactly that prevents me.

BEET. What!

NASH. A love of truth. For when a man takes a wife, he swears she shall be cherished, and not frost-bit.

BEET. I've cleared my doubts; good morning. (BAXTER *appears at back.*) Yet, allow me to hint that the family con-

nexions of Mr. Baxter—of Mr. Baxter, sir—are not to be despised.

NASH. Assuredly not—(*aside*) on the highway, and the moon down.

BEET. *He* mayn't pause to take ten thousand pounds.

NASH. I can answer for his alacrity.

BEET. And as I'm more than ever opposed to Mr. Derby, and you fail in your contract, I'll immediately hand over Belinda and her fortune to Mr. Baxter—to the nephew of my old and esteemed friend, Lord Fog. (*Exit.*)

BAXT. (*Coming down.*) Oh, sir! did I ever hope such luck!

NASH. What! you heard the alderman?

BAXT. I couldn't help it: such words would go through flint. I must always bless you, sir.

NASH. Ha! ha! You'd never carry on the trick? You, marry a lady—you, a half-reformed rogue?

BAXT. Ha, sir! but such a match would quite finish me. I'd marry, and suppress my "Life."

NASH. To obtain ten thousand pounds is certainly to have honesty made easy.

BAXT. It must be; for I feel virtuous only thinking of it. You'll not stand in a penitent's way, sir?

NASH. But your connexions, Jack? You have no lord for an uncle?

BAXT. I can't say I have, or I hav'n't. I have heard that the Baxters are an old family; though I can't exactly tell how we've been kept up.

NASH. Doubtless as some plants are kept up—by slips. However, make sure of the lady, and I may manage for your family. I may safely say that a race of Baxters came in with William the Conqueror.

BAXT. May you, indeed, squire?

NASH. Oh, yes: for there were thieves even in Normandy. Go, and do my errand: and as you do it, look for my good word. Take one of the servants; point Tom Lavender out; then let him have my card with compliments to meet me.

BAXT. I'm off, sir. And your worship's honour will stand my friend? If the alderman should inquire particularly—

NASH. I'll make you a most illustrious rascal, depend on't. (*Exit* BAXTER.) Now, but for me, that fellow's audacity might win a fortune. Yes, I am more convinced; the true philosopher's stone is only intense impudence. (*Looks at watch.*) I shall have time to work my plan. I'll first dose young Derby with a wholesome lie or two; lay bare to his eyes the knaves who have plundered him—marry him to Belinda—and consign my friend the marquis and his fellow to the mercies of the county turnkey. Yes—I'll give up Belinda. Alexander shall conquer his own passions. To be sure, at sixty-five the victory is not so difficult.

DERBY *is shewn in.*

Mr. Derby, I have heard of your great loss; you have my sympathy, though it cannot bring back what is gone.

DERB. (*Aside.*) Not a shilling!

NASH. Trust me, Mr. Derby, I wish to console you.

DERB. Console me! Can you shew me how I may recover my loss?

NASH. Recover! Why he has been dead these three days.

DERB. Dead! of whom—of what do you speak?

NASH. Of your loss! Of your poor uncle, my friend?

DERB. What have I to learn? My uncle! Tell me,—quickly.

NASH. Apoplexy—dead—I'm executor.

DERB. Dead!

NASH. Surely, you have no other new calamity? What can have happened? Come, you may trust your uncle's executor.

DERB. Plainly, sir, I had last night determined to fly with Belinda. I found her perverse,—trifling. The assembly over, I watched for her; she, as I felt, avoided me. Stung, irritated, I dashed to the tables: I lost and won—lost and won. My fortune turned—I lost all I had!

NASH. A common case: then, of course, you came away?

DERB. 'Twas not enough to lose the present, but I staked the future. I was in the devils's gripe—he held me fast. Step by step, he led me, dreaming, down the gamester's burning path, till I awoke in—perdition.

NASH. Coarse words, Mr. Derby—coarse words. In the language of polite life, you anticipated your uncle's benevolence? And the good man has been liberal. A legacy is left you—

DERB. A legacy! Why, sir, the whole estate,—

NASH. Goes to another person. Your uncle has left a sum sufficient to buy you a company. In a month, Belinda will be of age, and she has the true spirit for a soldier's wife.

DERB. A legacy! Destruction!

NASH. And you set up for a gamester—you, with your natural defects? Yes, sir, defects. Why, you have a high spirit—quick blood and a full heart. Sir, I'll give you some advice. For as you have been beggared possibly by rascals, you may be forced for future bread to turn rascal yourself: don't be offended—'tis a common change. With

such prospects, I'll briefly imagine for you what I consider the perfect model of a thorough gamester.

DERB. Sir, I am your debtor.

NASH. Take a skeleton from the box of an anatomist—give its head an immoveable mask of flesh—clothe the skull, but leave all beside dry bones—make it calculate, but not feel—give it motion, but not life—and there's your model, sir,—there's your trading gamester.

DERB. You—you thus moralize!

NASH. And who more able—since for the last thirty years I've seen the death's heads at work?

DERB. Was this sermon studied for me? Why was I sent for,—why—

NASH. I wished to condole with you on the loss of your uncle—and congratulate you, since I withdraw, on your approaching nuptials.

DERB. A beggar's nuptials!

NASH. Tut! say nothing of your loss to Belinda,—but marry her: the alderman may in time relent, and give you up her fortune.

DERB. Do you think me so sunk in infamy?

NASH. Coarse words again. Infamy! 'tis done every day, and called convenience.

DERB. And you truly mean this?—

NASH. Behold the evidence.

(BELINDA *is shewn in.*)

Madam, I thank this prompt answer to my letter. You may now guess its purport. I quit the field. Take hands, and be happy.

BEL. What! has the alderman consented?

NASH. On the contrary; acquainted with my resignation, he is now seeking another candidate. Hearken to a friend's

advice: as you are both great criminals, run, take sanctuary in a church. Captain Derby, again I congratulate you. (*Bows and exit.*)

BEL. Captain Derby!

DERB. Belinda—I—(*aside*) I cannot look at her.

BEL. What is all this? Well, sir, do you mean to run away with me, or shall I go home again? Last night, I own I had not wholly lost my jealous scruples; but I have since talked to the "beautiful Louisa," and—and,—yes, I ask you to forgive me. Last night, I refused my hand: to-day, I frankly give it.

DERB. Last night, it would have blest me beyond imagination; to-day, I must not take it.

BEL. Derby! Oh, you are changed—ill. What has happened?

DERB. Last night, I cast away the hopes of life—to-day, I am a beggar.

BEL. Take my hand!

DERB. I dare not—should not. The misery that must track me I'll endure alone. I will not add to its bitterness, by making you the partner.

BEL. Derby!—

DERB. No, Belinda; it must not be. Do not speak to me—for I feel scorched with shame, and cannot answer. I leave you to a better, to a happier man. (*Rushes into room at side.*)

BEL. My idle jealousy has done this! I have been vain, volatile; till now, I never fully knew my love.

Enter BAXTER.

BAXT. Tom's come.—(*Seeing her: aside.*) Madam Belinda! Luck again! Fortune must have fallen in love with me. Madam,—(*aside*)—yes, I'll begin the siege: at once, throw a few compliments at her. Madam,—I—I—I hope you are well?

BEL. Perfectly well, sir.

BAXT. The—the—hem!—the alderman, ma'am, is a fine gentleman?

BEL. He is fortunate, sir, in your good opinion!

BAXT. (*Aside.*) She seems a little restless.—I must fix her. Of course, ma'am, you have heard of the alderman's choice?

BEL. His choice!

BAXT. You know the certain happy man? Eh!

BEL. Indeed, sir, I am very dull: explain yourself.

BAXT. (*Falling on his knees.*) There, ma'am!

BEL. Sir! What does this mean?

BAXT. (*Aside.*) Well! I thought every woman understood that! Isn't this plain, ma'am?

BEL. Rise, sir—I command you.

BAXT. Not all the power of man shall move me, ma'am, until,—

Enter NASH.

NASH (*to* BAXTER.) Jack!

BAXT. Your honour!

NASH. You're a fool—get out of the way. Go;—but be at hand. (*Exit* BAXTER.)

BEL. Tell me, sir; tell me all. Is Mr. Derby,—

NASH. Ruined? Oh, yes: now, his only hope must be to brave the alderman, and get your fortune; for in his own words, he is a beggar. Look: there he sits; a monument of stupid misery. Go, madam; prevail on him to marry you; for 'tis the only desperate remedy. (*Shews her off.*) Now,—for I have left my philosopher,—

Enter LAVENDER TOM.

TOM. Again and again, squire, I apologize.

NASH. No, no—not a word.

Tom. I confess myself a heathen for my negligence. Pray, put my name down for the distressed colliers—the rooms—the hospital—and, indeed, for every possible charity. *Oh, la belle charité!*

Nash. Munificent. But, Mr. Lavender, when I left you, I was about to say, that hearing of your last night's good luck,—

Tom. I hope 'tisn't generally published: creditors are so apt to magnify one's little successes. I speak, Mr. Nash, as to a man skilled in the philosophy of life.

Nash. Oh, sir! The truth is, I learn every thing by the secret virtue of my office. And as king of Bath,—

Tom. By-the-by, that white hat,—he! he!—is't not a very extraordinary crown for your majesty?

Nash. Perhaps it is: and yet it has two eminent advantages; it is pure, and it is cheap.

Tom. But why—why do you wear a white hat?

Nash. In confidence, I'll tell you. I am—you must admit—the monarch of a very mixed people. And as, like Haroun Alraschid, I go at all times, and in all places, among 'em, I wear this very particular hat, that nobody may—

Tom. Yes,—

Nash. Steal it! You will perceive that, like a politic potentate, I know and am regulated by the secret wishes of a large body of my subjects. (*Lays his hat on table.*) To proceed: as ruler, I ought to dispense justice. You last night won a great sum of young Derby?

Tom. The proof is to come.

Nash. How?

Tom. I am a simple fool. I won all the loose cash he had; and then I gave him credit. I'm to have his bond to be paid on the death of his uncle. Now, as to death—

NASH. You are quite safe: the poor man has already one leg in the grave.

TOM. But your people with one leg in the grave, are so devilish long before they put in the other. They seem like birds, to repose better on one leg.

NASH. I assure you, he's at death's door, and must soon be let in. To begin: he has a horrible gout.

TOM. Gout goes for nothing.

NASH. An afflicting asthma.

TOM. That's better.

NASH. A recent attack of dropsy.

TOM. Come; we shall do. And yet,—

NASH. And yet, if you doubt, and want the bond cashed, I on easy terms will do it.

TOM. My dear squire, that is the very best thing you have said yet.

NASH. 'Twas to make the offer I sent for you. No thanks—it is my duty. We'll have a bond drawn up, and—

TOM. A curious chance; I have something in my pocket, —and was about to wait on Derby for his signature, when your man accosted me. (*Gives paper.*)

NASH. This appears to be regularly drawn,—

TOM. (*Aside*). King! he's an emperor!

Enter CASKET, WILTON, *and* CLAPTRAP.

CASK. Sir—this man—this player—will insist—

NASH. (*To* WILTON.) How now, my friend! I thought you had your answer?

WILT. (*To* CLAPTRAP.) Now, fellow, since you have confessed the trick to me,—say, who I really am.

CLAPT. Your honour, I made a mistake. This is Mr. Wilton; a gentleman as I hear of birth and means,—and

upon my honour, not one of Mr. Powel's company. (WILTON *gives letters to* NASH.)

NASH. Sir, your pardon. And now, your visit—

WILT. I have heard of the imprudence of Mr. Derby.

TOM. (*Aside.*) *Peste!* 'Twill be all over Bath; if so, I can hardly hope to cheat Dropper of his lawful half.

WILT. Learning at his lodgings that he was with you, as his friend I sought him here. I have also heard that this person—

TOM. Person! This is a sword, young man—

NASH. Confound me! It looks like one: and I perceive, Mr. Wilton, you too seem armed. Casket! (CASKET *goes to side of* WILTON: NASH *approaches* TOM: *lays one hand on his arm, and with the other suddenly draws his sword:* CASKET *at the same moment takes sword from* WILTON.) They *are* swords!

WILT. 'Sdeath! fellow—

NASH. He is my officer—respect him. They *are* swords; I suffer no swords to be worn in Bath. You are strangers, or would have known the law. No big looks, gentlemen; for, by my honour, in my day I have disarmed a full third of the house of lords.

Enter BAXTER.

BAXT. Mr. Dropper!

NASH. Very good. But you seek Mr. Derby? (*To* WILTON.) You'll find him, sir, in that room. (*Exit* WILTON.)

TOM. Derby here!

NASH. I sent for him to execute the bond. Your friend is just in time—we wanted a witness.

TOM. Why, indeed, I would rather that—

(*Enter* DROPPER.)

My dear Dropper,—pardon me an instant; I have a few words with his honour.

NASH. Pray take your time: the deed is ready, Mr. Derby prepared, and 'tis but to write a cheque for the money. (*Retires up with* BAXTER *and* CLAPTRAP.)

DROPP. Tom, (*laying his hat on table,*) that's my hat.

TOM. I know it—'tis a very old acquaintance.

DROPP. Humph! you'd use your old friends like hats; put 'em on and off as it served. There it is, I tell you, and I don't leave you until I have my share of the spoil.

TOM. Spoil!

DROPP. Come, all Bath's ringing with it, and yet you'd cheat me. Last night's spoil!

TOM. Upon my honour,—

DROPP. Your honour! Do you mean to insult me?

TOM. My dear friend, you are so vulgar—so prejudiced. Of course, you share: of course (*aside*) you do not.

DROPP. Well, it's enough to make one hate mankind. There is *no* friendship!

NASH. (*Aside to* BAXTER.) And the ladies,—they are here?

BAXT. Safe at hand.

TOM. (*Aside.*) I wonder that his majesty patronises Baxter.

DROPP. (*Aside.*) No! There can be no deceit in Jack! And yet 'tis such a world!

(*Enter* DERBY.)

Mr. Derby!

DERB. (*To* TOM.) Have you dogged me here?

TOM. Dogged! I believe, Mr. Derby, you owe me—

DERB. What, it matters little; my only hope is lost—I am a beggar. Still, I will sign the bond, and thus place my liberty in your hands.—I am at your mercy.

TOM. Liberty—mercy! What, sir, is there no money?

DERB. None.

TOM. Sir,—this is infamous. Am I to be robbed, sir?—

NASH. I am shocked—thunderstruck. (*Aside to* TOM.) I am like you a philosopher—you therefore have my sympathy. I am a man of the world, you shall have my advice. 'Tis but a feint; he has money—arrest him.

TOM. That's true philosophy—I will.

NASH. (*Calling off.*) John—send up the officers.

TOM. Officers! here! But first, proceedings—

NASH. Oh, the sheriff will be here with the corporation; and as a man of honour, Mr. Derby will sign and wait. I feel compromised, and take all responsibility on myself.

Enter OFFICERS.

NASH. (*Pointing to* TOM.) Secure that man.—(OFFICERS *seize him.*)

TOM. A mistake! That (*pointing to* DERBY) is the person.

NASH. Officers—hold fast! You are quite right.

TOM. Mr. Nash! *Va au diable!* (*Breaks from* OFFICERS: *seizes a sword from the table, and is making off, when he is encountered by* NASH, *who with the other sword disarms him:* TOM *falls.*)

NASH. Officers, pick up Lavender Tom. (DROPPER, *on the appearance of the* OFFICERS, *in mistake, hurriedly seizes the hat of* NASH, *and is about to escape: he is arrested by* BAXTER, CLAPTRAP, *and* CASKET.)

CLAP. A little mistake: you've taken his honour's hat!

NASH. Marquis,—I told you there was a significance in my white hat. Hold him, too.

TOM. But why is this—why?

NASH. Why?—Ladies!—

(*Enter Mrs.* CORAL, LOUISA, BELINDA, *and* WILTON.)

Do you know this ring?

MRS. C. (*Seeing* TOM.) That is the man who swore in French.

NASH. Do you know these ladies?

TOM. No!

NASH. Do you know this ring?

TOM. No.

DROPP. I do; for I see Baxter has trapped us. I took it from that lady, with twenty guineas. The marquis had half.

TOM. A lie.

DROPP. Look in his pocket.—(*They search* TOM, *and find purse.*)

MRS. C. My purse!

DROPP. You know, Cæsar went halves. You'd have tricked me, Tom; now, we are even; and may yet hang good friends.

TOM. This comes of your vulgar avarice. It has lost us every thing.

NASH. No, marquis; there is yet one thing to console you,—philosophy. Away with them. (TOM *and* DROPPER *are taken off.*)

DERB. What is all this?

NASH. A little offering of mine to justice. And now, sir, you see the knaves who would have plundered you?

DERB. I am lost in wonder at your kindness.

BEL. You are all goodness.—

NASH. I can't say,—I killed a man this morning. Mr. Derby, I ask your uncle's pardon: though I believe I am down for his executor, as yet there is happily no need of my services.

Enter BEETLE.

BEET. So madam! I find you here—in the house of the man who rejects you.

BEL. True, sir; and yet I hope to escape the willow—for here is the gentleman who has accepted me.

BAXT. (*Aside to* NASH.) Now, your worship; a word to the alderman.—

NASH. Alderman Beetle, Mr. Baxter,—

BEET. Mr. Baxter there is my niece: if I please she has ten thousand pounds. I know your family to be an honourable, ancient—

NASH. Alderman if any doubts exist with the heralds, here is, written by Mr. Baxter himself, his whole life, character, and behaviour.—(*Taking MS. from his pocket.*)

BAXT. (*Snatching the MS.*) I scratch a poor hand; when the book is printed, I'll send a copy. In the mean time, alderman, I wouldn't stand between madam Belinda and Mr. Derby. No,—I wouldn't—upon my honour. (*Exit.*)

NASH. Why, alderman, 'tis not Mr. Baxter from Staffordshire, but Jack Baxter, a poor rogue from Tunbridge, who has played my spy—who has enabled me to save young Derby, that he may be worthy of your niece. Come! there's no help for it: shall I join their hands.

BEET. If it must be so—and you will answer for the gentleman's reformation?

DERB. (*To* NASH.) Trust me, sir, you may. I forswear play for ever.

NASH. I believe you, and will be your surety. But here are two other turtles, who though silent, talk very eloquently. Mrs. Coral, you are a woman of discretion: what's to be done?

MRS. C. My brother, sir, is a very reasonable person;

and if you're sure the gentleman is not of Mr. Powel's company,— (*Music and shouts without.*)

BEET. Hark! The procession to attend you to the rooms. Come; all Bath will be there to see your statue.

NASH. My statue! May I die, but now the time is come, I tremble to face the honour. What have I done that I should stand in marble? I'm a king to be sure, and think the best of all governments is that of peace and good-humour. 'Tis true, I declare war against nothing but meanness—scandal—and ill-temper. If I mix with knaves 'tis to make knaves fall. Certain, my kingdom isn't large, but I sha'n't with my brother of Macedon weep for new empires—so I can keep all within my little realm happy in themselves, and at charity with all the world besides. If, as monarch, I can do this, it must be owned though my sceptre be a feather, 'tis a bright one, and may, perhaps, continue to be swayed by gay

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MEN.

Count de Beauvais.....Mr. Vining.
Philip.....Mr. W. Farren.
Frederick.....Mr. Cooper.
Joseph.....Mr. Cooke.
Servants, &c.

WOMEN.

Countess D'Harville.....Mrs. Faucit.
Matilda.....Miss Mordaunt.



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THE FORCE OF NATURE.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

A handsome apartment—folding doors in the flat scene: a large table covered with a rich cloth, upon which are writing materials, ladies' work boxes, &c.

COUNTESS D'HARVILLE *and* MATILDA *discovered seated—the Countess is working on canvass with colored worsted. Matilda is reading.*

COUNTESS. Well, Matilda, you are tired of reading?

MAT. No, but I was thinking, Aunt—

COUNTESS. Of what, child?

MAT. This romance—how singular! the resemblance which the story of the hero bears to that of Frederick—an unknown orphan—from infancy indebted for every thing to the kindness of a stranger, as he is to you.

COUNTESS. (*With a little embarassment.*) Yes, 'tis possible—there may be some similarity.

MAT. But I'll proceed.

COUNTESS. Not now—you may fatigue yourself—besides, it must be almost breakfast hour

MAT. Provoking! I'm so anxious to know what becomes of the poor youth; he is so good—so amiable—just like Frederick.

COUNTESS. Frederick again! why his name is for ever in your mouth. Listen to me, Matilda, and attentively if you can.

MAT. Yes, if I can.

COUNTESS. You take too much interest in Frederick—he is certainly a deserving youth—but a young lady of your birth ought to be more reserved.

MAT. How! Madam?

COUNTESS. I intended to have spoken to you on this subject—some evenings ago, you recollect, we were at the Opera—I did Frederick the honor to admit him to my box; my nephew, the Count de Beauvais, was there also, who, in spite of some youthful follies, is one of the most accomplished —most admired—

MAT. Well, Aunt, what of all this to me?

COUNTESS. 'Tis a great deal to you, Matilda, and I desire I may not be interrupted, I have designs in view for you child, which—but, to return to the Opera—you did nothing but laugh and chat the whole evening with Frederick—quite a shame—people never laugh at the Opera—and, when we were leaving, it was Frederick's arm you took, without even noticing the Count, who offered you his. (*They rise.*)

MAT. And am I to blame because—

COUNTESS. It was not right—you must think of your rank—

MAT. But how could it derogate from my rank to—

COUNTESS. I repeat it—it is necessary upon every occasion to consult the laws of etiquette.

MAT. I consult nothing but my heart, and I am sure if you knew how grateful Frederick is to you—how much he loves you.

COUNTESS. I believe it, Matilda—at least, I should wish to believe it—and yet, to say nothing of my position—I do not find in him that solicitude to please me—those attentions which I think I have a right to expect from a young man who owes me all.

MAT. But, Aunt—

COUNTESS. My house is his—my drawing room is always open to him, where he might form his manners to the tone of the best society; yet he scarcely ever condescends to appear at my Soireès.

MAT. Your Soireès are very fine to be sure, but to say the truth, they are not always very amusing.

COUNTESS. Matilda!

MAT. To a young man, I mean:—to hear nothing talked of but the antiquity of our race—the gallant deeds of the D'Harville's—for myself, who have the honor to be one of the same stock, I assure you that sometimes—

COUNTESS. What do you mean, Matilda?

MAT. Only, that it is not unnatural—Frederick, who is young, impatient, and giddy—for he is giddy. I acknowledge—but his heart makes amends for all.

COUNTESS. Why, what do you know of his heart, child?

MAT. (*Warmly.*) I know, Aunt, that the day your horses took fright, my cousin, De Beauvais, contented himself with calling for assistance, but Frederick threw himself before the fiery animals, and saved your life at the risk of his own.

COUNTESS. Indeed!

MAT. Ay, indeed—and not to alarm you with the sight

of his bleeding hands and torn garments he flew away enjoining me to keep the secret.

COUNTESS. You did wrong, Matilda—what! I not know of this!—Frederick!

MAT. Between ourselves, Aunt, you've a certain air of dignity about you that intimidates him a little. He has often said to me as we chatted together—

COUNTESS. Ay-ay!

MAT. Yes; I suppose he don't find the same intimidating air of dignity in me. "Ah!" he has said, "why have I no means of proving my gratitude to my benefactress: if she were married, I could follow her husband to the army—I could shed my own blood to preserve his life."

COUNTESS. Did he say so?

MAT. Yes, Aunt—and that brought to my mind a reflection I had never made before—why were you never married?

COUNTESS. (*Embarassed.*) Why!—eh!—pooh! that's a childish question.

MAT. Yet it seems to me that with beauty and a noble name—

COUNTESS. When one has a noble name, niece, we can't do better than preserve it—but I see, you have the ideas of your mother, who, though my sister, preferred marrying a plebeian, to remaining in a state of honorable celibacy: he was rich—to be sure,—nothing more.

MAT. He loved my mother, and made her happy.

COUNTESS, Tut! that's no excuse—happiness could not justify such a fault.

MAT. (*In a caressing tone.*) And yet without that fault perhaps you would not now have a niece who loves you in her heart.

COUNTESS. (*Embracing her.*) True, true my dear Matilda—but here comes Frederick I suppose, at last—'tis at least two hours since I sent for him.

MAT. (*Disappointedly.*) No—it's only Philip.

Enter PHILIP *carrying a parcel of papers.*

COUNTESS. Well, Philip, what have you there?

PHIL. Letters—newspapers—and the month's accounts. (*Handing the papers.*)

COUNTESS. Thank you, Philip, (*Taking the letters and newspapers.*) As to the accounts I need take no trouble with them.

PHIL. But you need though—mustn't they be signed?

COUNTESS. Oh! if that be all—

(*Going to the table and preparing to sign the papers that Philip places before her.*)

PHIL. What! sign without reading!—no, no, I'll not suffer that.

COUNTESS. With you 'tis quite unnecessary.

MAT. What a pity Philip is only a steward; he ought to be at least Lord treasurer.

COUNTESS. If integrity conferred nobility, Philip would be the noblest man in the land.

PHIL. Hum! and if I were, who knows how long I should be an honest one.

COUNTESS. Come, come, your cynical humour cannot make me under-value what I owe you.

PHIL. Pshaw!

COUNTESS. Have I not the reputation of being mistress of twice the fortune that I really possess? though my expenses are great I am never in debt, and have always money at command.

PHIL. No great merit in that, if one only keeps in mind

that two and two make four—but come—no more parleying —read.

COUNTESS. Since it must be so. (*Examines the accounts.*)

MAT. Well, Philip, you have one privilege above even the noblest of my aunt's most noble relatives; you can contradict—nay, scold her, without ever making her angry.

COUNTESS. (*Still looking at the papers.*) What's here (*Reads.*) "Given in charity, by the Countess D'Harville, six thousand francs"—that's more than double the usual sum.

PHIL. We had more than double the usual quantity of frost and snow this winter; and I thought it would be as much to the credit of your illustrious house, that its gates should be as well known to the indigent as the great.

COUNTESS. (*Rising and reading with a smile.*) Hey! what's here?—"To poor disbanded soldiers."

PHIL. Ay, some of my brave companions, remnants like myself of the victorious army of the Rhine and Moselle—We ought to do something for those who were there.

COUNTESS. Yes, Philip, any thing—every thing—is it not to the generous devotion of one of them I am indebted for my life?

PHIL. Well, I didn't mean to put you in mind of it now.

MAT. I forgot that—Philip you have a right to scold my aunt as often as you choose, and me too if you have any fancy for it.

COUNTESS. (*Reading.*) "Allowance to Frederick—five hundred francs"—that's too much for a month.

PHIL. I say it's too little: you have brought him up and protected him—I suppose you don't mean to do the business by halves—he must have masters—a man without fortune has need of much to recommend him in the world.

COUNTESS. That's what I wish you would impress upon

him—I have placed you near him, Philip, as a guide, a friend, and I have reason to complain of him, and of you too—you spoil him—you are not half severe enough—I find he keeps improper hours.

PHIL. (*Embarassed.*) Eh! how!

COUNTESS. I did not see him the whole of yesterday.

PHIL. Indeed!

COUNTESS. This morning I sent for him, but he has not made his appearance yet.

PHIL. Perhaps he was out early—something about his law studies—how do you know, when you think he's from home that he isn't sitting up all night at his books?

MAT. There, Aunt—and perhaps he'll injure his health.

COUNTESS. I never thought of that—I don't like it—I'll forbid him to study so hard.

PHIL. (*Apart.*) I'm afraid it's a useless trouble.

COUNTESS. (*Taking a purse from a small coffer on the table.*) There—there's a quarter's allowance for him, and d'ye hear, Philip, recommend economy, regularity, and good conduct.

PHIL. I will, but you, on your side, must be a little more indulgent.

COUNT. (*Speaks without.*) Not breakfasted yet!—I'm in luck.

COUNTESS. My Nephew, I declare.

Enter the COUNT DE BEAUVAIS *in an elegant fashionable morning dress preceded by a Servant, who announces. —Philip is at the table occupied in arranging his papers.*

SER. The Count D'Harville de Beauvais.

COUNT. (*Taking the Countess's hand.*) I have the honor to salute my most sublime Aunt; happy to see my exquisite cousin:—You see, up with the larks to-day; eh! can hard-

ly think it's myself; to be on foot with the rest of the world —cursedly vulgar!

COUNTESS. How has it happened, Nephew?

COUNT. Took time by the forelock; didn't go to bed at all; sure way to pass for an early riser.

PHIL. *(Apart)* He'll not be called to account for his hours!

MAT. Pretty habits, Count de Beauvais!

COUNT. Spare me, cousin; I'm a sad dog, I know; but there are so many balls this winter; and then the nights are so short—and life too—(*Humming an air.*)

MAT. That you're determined to make it a merry one.

COUNTESS. You'll breakfast with us, Count?

MAT. I'll go and hasten it, Aunt. [*Exit Matilda.*

(*Countess sits at table, and signs the papers, as Philip puts them before her.*)

COUNT. Yes, just popped in to take your chocolate, and to give you my thanks; you have seen Aaron, eh? that Prince of usurers.

COUNTESS. *(Gravely.)* I see him too often of late, Nephew.

COUNT. Not my fault, upon my soul; English horses are so devilish dear! they and the opera will positively be my ruin—that is—the *(Aside.)* opera dancers.

COUNTESS. You are really too extravagant.

COUNT. I say so to myself, every day; when I see the money slipping through my fingers like quicksilver; but hang it, counting is so plebeian a trick—such bad taste in a man of rank!

PHIL. *(Aside.)* True, when it's not his own money he's spending.

COUNT. One must do something to be talked of, you

know; pity there's no war! the thing might be managed cheaper; I could cover my brows with laurels, or get my brains blown out.

COUNTESS. How! expose your life! you, the last of the D'Harvilles! No, no, nephew; and now we are upon that chapter, I must say, you are too rash—too hot-headed for the sole representative of our house; what is this adventure that was buzzed about last night, in every saloon?

COUNT. Ha, ha! what you heard of it then?

COUNTESS. Yes, and I was exceedingly alarmed.

COUNT. Tut, you know I never miss my man; and there was no help for it; you shall judge:—Among the lovely nymphs of Terphsichore at the Opera, I discovered one, with the aid of my glass, whose brilliant charms threw all beside her into shade: such a figure! such an instep! such a ravishing foot!

COUNTESS. Oh fie, nephew!

COUNT. Don't be afraid—I'll skim over the rest; in short, she was a perfect Venus! I was told I had a rival.

PHIL. Count D'Harville a rival!

COUNT. I thought it impossible too, Philip—but this is an age of wonders:—I flew to my divinity—she was in her boudoir, turned the handle of the door to enter, it was locked—and presently a squeaking peacock voice within cries out:—'Who's there?'

COUNTESS. Good heavens!

COUNT. The thing was clear—another would have made a blow up—I took it coolly: not being able to hand my card to the gentleman, I wrote with a pencil upon the door: 'The lover of my mistress is an ass—I wait for him in the wood.'—D'HARVILLE DE BEAUVAIS.

COUNTESS. And did he come?

COUNT. Better than that—no less than three came.

Each had taken my note to himself—in short, it was a kind of circular.

COUNTESS. *(Rising agitated).* And you fought?

COUNT. To be sure I did—with the whole three: wounded one—disarmed the second—and breakfasted with the third!

COUNTESS. Breakfast with who might have been your murderer!

COUNT. we s ever since—duels are charming ke fri e and death; last night we were t ty—a circle of—a—by the bye, k there.

PHIL.

COUNTES

PHIL. He's mistaken—'tis not possible.

COUNT. So possible though that I spoke to him; Gad I was astonished myself to meet him in such a place.

COUNTESS. (*Looks angry.*) How's this? *(To Philip.)*

PHIL. And what harm, that one of his age should take amusement for an hour or so?

COUNT. Faith no—for an hour or so, as you say—but a whole night of it!

COUNTESS. What! out all night!

COUNT. 'Twas six o'clock this morning when I came away, and I left him in the thick of it.

PHIL. *(Apart).* Devil confound his babbling tongue!

COUNTESS. So, Philip, this is the way he injures his health by studying! vastly well! but the house, nephew—I suppose, that was unobjectionable?

COUNT. Hum! so, so.

PHIL. Wasn't the Count there?

COUNT. Oh, that's another thing; *we* go every where; but a poor devil who hasn't a sous in his pocket—however, I say nothing—no wish to injure the boy.

PHIL. Nay—nay, out with it all, and don't let worse be imagined than needs—even if there should be an opera dancer at the bottom of it! (*Pointedly.*)

COUNTESS. Philip, the count is not speaking to you.

COUNT. No matter—let him indulge his eloquence—a rare talent in a steward! I suppose you pay dear for such a luxury.

PHIL. Not quite so dear as people are sometimes made to pay for impertinence.

COUNTESS. Silence, Philip—you forget yourself; come nephew—have a care before Matilda—not a hint of this affair to her, or all our projects—

COUNT. Bah! what is it after all?—a bagatelle for a bachelor—but when I'm married—

COUNTESS. I hope you will be wiser.

COUNT. Surely, surely, wise enough to hold my tongue.

COUNTESS. (*Low to Philip.*) I'm displeased! your arm, nephew,—much displeased!

[*Exeunt Count and Countess at bottom.*

PHIL. (*Alone.*) 'Much displeased'—hum, big words! stop a man's mouth—this prating coxcomb, with his tales, and his airs of contempt—contempt for Frederick! the boy's in fault, I don't deny it; but that's her affair and mine. Poor fellow! his three months—(*Weighing the purse which he holds.*) not very heavy! and now, not a sous in addition to hope for! (*Looking round him and rummaging his pocket.*) Well! it's the time to give him a helping hand—my store of ammunition is not very great to be sure; but with a little economy one may always have a charge or two for the use of a friend—(*Takes out a rouleau of Napoleons, puts some in the purse.*) Where the devil can he have passed the night?—and not home;

yet; I'm angry—mad with him—*(He stops putting in the money.)* yet, perhaps it was not his own fault: Pshaw! may as well give it him all—*(Emptying the rouleau.)* It saves trouble—

Enter FREDERICK *and* JOSEPH, R.

FRED. Go, Joseph—put this note into her work basket, or her drawing case—but mind, on your life, let no one see you—and there's my last piece of gold.

PHIL. 'Tis he!

(Frederick places his hat and cane on the table.)

FRED. She will know all—but when I am far away.

(He paces the room—and throws himself into a chair.)

PHIL. *(At bottom of the scene, to the right—observing Frederick, and approaching.)* How haggard he looks! as much knocked up as if he had made a forced march of a hundred leagues! poor boy!

FRED. Perhaps she will pity me (*Seeing Philip.*) Ha! Philip.

PHIL. (*Changing his tone.*) So! you're here at last—zounds! have you no shame in you?

FRED. Spare your remonstrances, Philip—I'm not in a humour to hear them now.

PHIL. But you must hear them in spite of your humour—what sort of a life is this you're leading—to give us all so much vexation—and your—the Countess in particular.

FRED. (*Rising with animation.*) The Countess say you—eh! what, Philip—does she know—

PHIL. She knows all—I have had a pretty budget of lies to invent, excusing you—what I never did for myself:—but they were of no use—she would hear nothing—she's in a fury.

FRED. Well then, it wanted but this—I could have

braved all—I had taken my resolution—but she discards me—she, for whom I would have sacrificed my life.

PHIL. That's right—but do you care nothing for what you cost me?—your firm ally—who, in your absence or your presence, is ever ready to fight your battles!

FRED. Forgive me, Philip—I'm ungrateful—mad—but can I help it—I am miserable.

PHIL. You, miserable! (*Sternly.*) I understand, young man, you have been playing some pretty pranks.

FRED. One single error has led to twenty others.

PHIL. So—that sounds well for a beginning: but let's proceed with method—what's the first on the muster roll?

FRED. I'm in love.

PHIL. In love!—hum!—well, one must be so now and again—no great harm in that, provided the fit don't last too long.

FRED. But 'tis with one whose rank places her at such a distance.

PHIL. Pshaw! you're not the first handsome young blade who has got over the distance by a short cut, and this lady—

FRED. I dare not name—I would even hide it from myself—oh, Philip, how painful to feel one's heart burn with the noble thirst of distinction; to feel conscious of the power to excel, and yet to see incessantly an invincible obstacle—a wall of iron, repelling every effort—to be nameless—nameless! that dreadful word seems for ever ringing in my ear.

PHIL. Tut, tut—is not honor in the reach of every one who has the boldness to grasp it—who asks now from what point a man sets out—they look only to the point he reaches.

FRED. Vain words! I feel myself weighed down under a

load of humiliation; an object of contempt to all the titled coxcombs who are welcomed here—this house is become odious to me—and, in despair, I rushed to the gaming table!

PHIL. What! played!

FRED. Like a fool! like a madman!

PHIL. *(Mournfully taking his hand.)* Ah! Frederick, this is indeed bad, very bad—no need to ask you if you have lost.

FRED. More than I can ever pay!

PHIL. I ought to scold you, Frederick, and I will scold you, but not now—it shall lose nothing by the keeping. Money's the point in question at present: here's a quarter's allowance. *(Handing the purse.)*

FRED. A quarter's! ah! 'tis not enough.

PHIL. How! is your loss so considerable?

FRED. I played and betted the whole night against the Count de Beauvais.

PHIL. Zounds!

FRED. That man is insupportable! I would have given worlds to have conquered him—but, alas! his good fortune is as unvarying as his effrontery—I lost eleven thousand francs!

PHIL. Lord have mercy upon us!

FRED. Yes, eleven thousand francs, which I borrowed from my companions and the master of the house—all must be paid to day—you will yourself see, that I have nothing for it but to blow my brains out.

PHIL. What language is this, boy?

FRED. That of one pursued by misfortune.

PHIL. And do you call it courage, when an enemy pursues you, to turn your back on him and fly!

FRED. Can I bear to be dishonored? no, I must die.

PHIL. You must live, I say—and pay.

FRED. Pay eleven thousand francs! how?

PHIL. Ah! some puzzle in that.

FRED. I have been to the houses of all my friends.

PHIL. Bah! friends! when there's money wanting they are seldom at home—there's but one person who can help you at this pinch—

FRED. I know—the Countess.

PHIL. You must tell her all.

FRED. Never—never—in spite of my affection she inspires me with an awe.—

PHIL. No matter, man, it must be done—'twill be your punishment; and hark, I hear her step.

FRED. You will not leave us?

PHIL. Never fear—make the best stand you can, and I'll be here as your corps de reserve.

Enter COUNTESS D'HARVILLE, R. H. *she walks slowly and pensively without perceiving Frederick or Philip.*

FRED. How thoughtful she seems—and her look so severe.

PHIL. Go to her—don't be afraid.

FRED. (*Advancing a few steps, then retreating.*) By heaven I cannot!—'tis beyond my power—I'd rather die.

(*Rushes off*, L. H.)

PHIL. How, now! run away!—and leave me to open the first fire alone! well, here goes to the charge. (*Advancing.*)

COUNTESS. Ha! is it you, Philip—so, Frederick is returned at last.

PHIL. Yes.

COUNTESS. Well, I hope you have spoken to him. (*Observing Philip who is looking about on all sides.*) Eh!—what in the world are you looking about for so?

PHIL. Only to see that no one comes to interrupt us—we must be alone.

COUNTESS. How! has anything happened?

PHIL. Yes, a little accident—a trifle—but what is youth?—a fever that passes over sooner or later.

COUNTESS. What are you leading to, Philip?

PHIL. Simply this—*(Lowering his voice.)* The boy has been at the gaming table.

COUNTESS. Frederick!

PHIL. Yes—he has played—and lost—and is over head and ears in debt: (*Apart.*) There, shot after shot, it's the sooner over.

COUNTESS. What do you tell me—then the house, where my nephew met him—

PHIL. Was a gaming house, but one of your highflying ones, all titled sharpers; consequently, the boy was robbed like a duke,—that's one comfort, isn't it?

COUNTESS. Gambling—and lost! what's to be done!

PHIL. Pay his debts.

COUNTESS. I encourage such conduct!—pay gambling debts!

PHIL. Yes, eleven thousand francs.

COUNTESS. What signifies the sum? am I accustomed to count francs, when 'tis to render a service? I hope in that you will at least give me credit for nobility! but such impropriety! no, Philip, no—I'll not pay a sous.

PHIL. *(Warmly.)* You'll not pay a sous?

COUNTESS. No, not a sous; what would my family—what would the world say if the fortune of the D'Harvilles was to be wasted in repairing the extravagances of a libertine?

PHIL. The world—your family—one would think you had sacrificed enough to them, already.

COUNTESS. Philip!

PHIL. Don't fear, what I've sworn I'll abide by—but I

have a duty to perform, remember that this poor youth has but you in the world; if you suffer him to be dishonored, he has a heart, madam, he'll not survive it?

COUNTESS. Oh, heavens!

PHIL. He's resolved—and indeed what great ties has he to life? as he just now said to me—'I am alone in the world without parent—without hope, owing everything to charity.'

COUNTESS. *(In a softened tone.)* Did he say so?

PHIL. Ay, and many other things that made me blubber like a child; poor fellow! when I looked at him, I couldn't help saying to myself—*(Pauses.)*

COUNTESS. Well, Philip.

PHIL. Nothing—nothing, my heart was full; but you are not tormented with such feelings,—you are tranquil, happy.

COUNTESS. I—happy! no, Philip, no, I am not happy.

PHIL. How! in your splendid saloons, surrounded by the flattering world! by your illustrious family who bow to your every nod!

COUNTESS. I know what I owe to the honor of that family, but at the bottom of my heart do you suppose I feel nothing?

PHIL. Madam?

COUNTESS. I'll pay all; but you must not speak of it to any one—not even to himself.

PHIL. Why! are you afraid he'll love you too much?

COUNTESS. How can you think so? but my nephew would be astonished—displeased—you know he is my heir—the heir to the family estates which I cannot deprive him of—

PHIL. The greater reason to do something for poor Frederick, whilst you have the power; and first of all, he

must never be exposed to fall into the like again; his allowance is not large enough.

COUNTESS. Well, double it.

PHIL. And then all his companions have horses, carriages, (*Countess looks surprised.*) now, if he had a handsome saddle horse, and a smart groom in livery.

COUNTESS. Really, Philip, these are extravagant notions.

PHIL. Nay, but hear me—

COUNTESS. Well, well, buy the horse.

PHIL. Shall I (*Aside.*) Egad! I'll buy him a rare trotter! fifteen miles an hour, at least; (*Aloud.*) and when you see him mounted. I'll answer for it, you'll be satisfied. Some days ago in the Tuilleries, I heard ladies, ay, and titled ladies too, say as he passed—'What a fashionable looking youth, elegant air!'

COUNTESS. Indeed!

PHIL. Ay, truly; he didn't hear it, but I did, every word, and it gladdened my heart.

COUNTESS. Yes, I confess, there is something in his countenanee, Philip.

PHIL. That must make him friends every where, and if you would only encourage him a little, speak to him kindly now and again,—you are too severe with him.

COUNTESS. I!

PHIL. There he is now, (*Pointing to the door.*) trembling like a frightened hare.

COUNTESS. There—Frederick, there!

PHIL. Yes, and if you'd just tell him, that you'd forgive him.

COUNTESS. But are you sure there's nobody—

PHIL. No, no, not a soul is near us; shew for once, what your heart really is, kind and indulgent, and fear no-

thing. *(Countess sits at table—Philip goes to the door and makes a sign.)*

Enter FREDERICK, *timidly.*

PHIL. *(Apart to Frederick.)* Come, all's settled.

FRED. Is it possible?

PHIL. The thing's done—brush up, man; go thank her.

COUNTESS. Come near, Frederick.

PHIL. *(Pushing him.)* Nearer, nearer.

COUNTESS. *(Mildly.)* I know all, Frederick, *(Frederick looks shocked.)* don't be alarmed, I will not add to the reproaches which I'm sure your own heart makes you; I will repair your folly, but let this lesson not be lost upon you.

FRED. I can never forget that, or your goodness to the last moment of my life.

PHIL. That's right—*(Approaches nearer the Countess.)*

COUNTESS. Frederick, I implore you, do not become a gambler.

FRED. (*With energy.*) Never—madam, never, *(Aside.)* I'm all astonishment—so much generosity!

PHIL. He'll never play again, his first and last time.

COUNTESS. You know not what pain it would give me.

FRED. I would not for worlds give you a moment's uneasiness—you who have heaped with benefits one without a friend—

COUNTESS. You have friends, Frederick, who will never abandon you—as long as you are worthy of them.

PHIL. No fear of that—I answer for him.

FRED. (*Kissing her hand.)* Rely on a grateful heart.

(*Countess turns away with emotion.*)

PHIL. *(Aside to Countess.)* Heaven bless you! *(To himself.)* If I were in her place, I couldn't help doing more—*(Making the movement of embracing.)*

COUNTESS. And your labors, your studies, how do they go on? are you thinking of making a name for yourself?

FRED. I am already qualified to become an advocate.

PHIL. There, you see, he's an advocate! and he never said a word about it.

FRED. But little in that, Philip, unless a man has distinguished himself.

COUNTESS. He is right.

PHIL. Hard work, I believe—they say promotion comes but slowly in that corps—but no matter—it's something to be an advocate at his age—isn't it, Madam?

COUNTESS. Yes, 'tis a title to notice—I have seen advocates who were received in the best houses—it's a step that may lead to more.

PHIL. That's true.

COUNTESS. *(Observing Frederick attentively.—Aside.)* Yes, Philip was right; he's certainly far from ill-looking—elegant air.—*(She rises :—to Frederick.)* Hear me, Frederick, I am much interested in your future prospects—in your happiness—but you must promise not to oppose my wishes in any respect.

FRED. Speak, Madam, decide my fate!

COUNTESS. Well then, Frederick, I have a most honorable establishment in view for you—an office, worth 20,000 francs.

FRED. Ah! Madam.

COUNTESS. 'Tis that of my advocate—he will resign it to you as the dowry of his daughter—a charming girl—well educated—accomplished—most eligible marriage.

FRED. (*Apart.*) Oh, heavens!

COUNTESS. You are silent, Frederick.

FRED. (*Hesitating.*) Pardon, Madam,—pardon—but —I cannot accept—

PHIL. The devil! is the fellow mad!

COUNTESS. What does he say?

FRED. Hear me, madam—

COUNTESS. No, sir, unless it is to say that you at once consent to this marriage.

FRED. Impossible! though it were even to cost me—

COUNTESS. 'Tis enough, sir—

Enter MATILDA *hastily*, R. H.

MAT. Bless me! aunt, haven't you settled these accounts with Philip, yet? but what's the matter?—you look angry.

COUNTESS. (*Looking at Frederick.*) And I think I have some right to be so.

MAT. Against Frederick?

COUNTESS. Yes, and even you, miss, who always take his part—I believe you will find it difficult to excuse him—refuse such a splendid marriage!

PHIL. An office worth 20,000 francs!

COUNTESS. And a charming girl!

MAT. Is this true, Frederick?

COUNTESS. And why—for what reason? 'tis inexplicable!

FRED. Suppose I am no longer free—suppose my heart were engaged?

PHIL. Zounds! that's true; I had forgot, the boy's in love.

FRED. To my own misfortune! but, why should I make another wretched, by marrying where I could not give my heart?

MAT. My aunt must acknowledge such sentiments are honorable; it would be cruel to force him.

COUNTESS. What! to be rational! 'pon my word! but I must know who is the object of this whim; (*To Philip.*) perhaps, you are in his confidence?

PHIL. (*To Frederick.*) Speak out, Frederick, who is she?

FRED. Forbear! I can love her, in secret, without guilt, but to name her—

Enter COUNT DE BEAUVAIS, R. H.

COUNT. Heyday! what the devil's become of you all? Here I am left alone moping up and down the house as melancholy as a sick kitten—was looking for you, in particular, my pretty cousin.

MAT. Indeed!

COUNT. Yes—you know I always fall asleep when I am left alone, so, to keep myself alive, I began to rummage your portfolio,—some charming sketches!—admirable taste! Amongst the rest out tumbled this sealed letter.

COUNTESS. A letter!

COUNT. The address, 'Matilda'.

FRED. (*Clasping his hands in great emotion;—apart.*) 'Tis mine.

COUNTESS. What is this about?

MAT. I can't guess, Aunt—here, see yourself—(*Handing the letter.*)

PHIL. (*Low to Frederick who makes a movement.*) What's the matter with you, boy?

FRED. (*Striking his forehead.*) 'Tis all over—I'm ruined—lost!

COUNTESS. (*Who has unsealed—and read the letter.*) A declaration of love!—

COUNT. (*Reading over her shoulder.*) Signed,

'Frederick.'

MAT. COUNTESS, *and* PHIL. Frederick!!!

COUNTESS. Was ever such insolence! but it's my own fault—my foolish indulgence—

COUNT. Pretty audacity!

COUNTESS. To insult me in this manner!

COUNT. To forget who he is!

COUNTESS. And the respect due to my family!

COUNT. Handsome return for all your charity! But this comes of taking people out of their proper place.

COUNTESS. You are right, nephew, and from this moment I discard him.

MAT. How, madam!

COUNTESS. (*Looking sternly at Matilda—then at Philip.*) Let no one, under pain of my resentment, presume to intercede for him—

FRED. Will you not hear me, madam?

COUNTESS. Leave me, sir: (*To Count De Beauvais.*) —Here, nephew, take this key,—go to my secretaire, and draw on my banker for a year's allowance.

COUNT. Ha! he may open a shop upon that. [*Exit.*

FRED. And do you think I can accept your benefits?

PHIL. Hold your tongue.

COUNTESS. Retire, Matilda, to your apartment; and you, Philip, follow me—(*Philip is about to speak.*) Not a word, I command—his doom is fixed. (*She makes a sign to Matilda who withdraws by door at the right.—Countess departs by door in the flat, followed by Philip who looks at her imploringly. Frederick remains for a moment in a posture of stupefied despair; then, striking his forehead, with an air of distraction, rushes off at the left.*)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

An Apartment in the Mansion of the Countess.

Enter MATILDA, L. H.

MAT. Imprudent youth! what is to become of him?—how could he have been so careless? if he had given it me himself, I should have bee ry angry with him, but —I don't think I'd have s my aunt:—Heigho! I suppose, I shall never see n.

Enter FREDERICK tiously, R. H.

FRED. Matilda—

MAT. Ha! Frederick. (*Going.*)

FRED. Stay, for mercy's sake—one word—

MAT. Impossible.

FRED. In the name of heaven, deign to hear me?

MAT. Not now—I dare not—my aunt—the Count De Beauvais—

FRED. What's their anger now to me? 'tis only yours I think of—and when one word would justify me—

MAT. Justify! I wish you could.

FRED. The secret ought to have died with me—I know it—and when I betrayed it, I was resolved to die.

MAT. Good heavens! you frighten me.

FRED. What else remains for me now?

MAT. Oh, Frederick—Frederick—(*With a more tender air.*) I know I have no right to control you in any thing—but if you really wish me to forgive you—renounce such thoughts—preserve yourself for your friends.

FRED. My friends!—I have none.

MAT. Ah! Frederick, you have more than you believe.

FRED. Gracious powers! Dare I—oh, Matilda?
(*Falling on his knees at her feet.*)

Enter COUNT DE BEAUVAIS, R. H. *at bottom, a paper in hand.*

COUNT. (*Seeing them, in a drawling mocking tone.*) Hey!—what's all this?

MAT. Ah! [*Shrieks and rushes off.*

COUNT. (*Laughing.*) Inimitable! by all that's romantic—the very highest flight of the pathetic—luckily I am the only witness.

FRED. Sir—

COUNT. Don't be uneasy—shan't breathe a hint of it to my aunt, 'pon honor!—know she would not give you this, and then—poor devil—you might starve! (*Handing him an order.*) There, take it and be off.

FRED. Never—I take no favor from the hand that offers it.

COUNT. Eh! give me leave to ask you what you mean?

FRED. That I owe every thing to my benefactress—to you nothing—and give me leave to ask you, Sir, by what right you have presumed—

COUNT. To surprise you at my cousin's feet, eh!

FRED. No, Sir—but to take possession of a letter which did not belong to you. 'Twas an action unworthy of a gentleman—do you understand me?

COUNT. Oh, yes—plain enough—but really for an upstart, a sort of nobody as one may say—to insult me, when you know you are sheltered from my chastisement—

FRED. Am I to understand then, that you consider your noble birth as an excuse for refusing me satisfaction?

COUNT. Why no—its the fashion now a days to consider

all men equals with arms in their hands—what I allude to is your kind of mongrel position in this house.

FRED. I am banished from it.

COUNT. Methinks you might at least recollect how long it afforded you a shelter.

FRED. You force me to forget it—the benefits I have received from the aunt are counterbalanced by the insults of the nephew—the account is clear, and if you are not a coward—

COUNT. Eh! come, that's rather strong—I believe I must indulge him with a lesson—well, Sir—what's your weapon?

FRED. I've no choice.

COUNT. Sword?

FRED. Be it so.

COUNT. Your second?

FRED. I want none.

COUNT. The place?

FRED. Bois de Boulogne.

COUNT. And hour?

FRED. Instantly.

COUNT. I'm yours—au revoir. [*Exit*, R. H.

FRED. I'll follow—'tis done—I know he's one of the most skilful swordsmen of the day, and I'm a novice—so much the better; 'twill be the sooner ended, and I shall be delivered from an existence that's a burden to me—since I am never again to behold Matilda, I cannot leave this house too soon. *(Going.)*

Enter PHILIP, L. H.

PHIL. Leave the house! not in such a hurry my youngster.

FRED. What brings you here, Philip?

PHIL. To speak to you.

FRED. Are you not forbid?

PHIL. Pshaw! listen to me?—you have played the very devil—first of all to fall in love with the Lady Matilda—secondly to write to her—thirdly, not to have made me your confident.

FRED. You?

PHIL. Yes—who knows what we might have contrived between us.

FRED. Would you have given it a thought?

PHIL. Would I?—for twenty years what else have I thought of but your happiness, your advancement—you have never been half so ambitious for yourself, boy, as I have been

FRED. My kind Philip.

PHIL. But to come to the point, you must march under my orders at present, and not a word of mutiny—in the first place, you may stay where you are.

FRED. Is it possible?—how have you obtained such a permission.

PHIL. On two conditions.

FRED. (*Warmly.*) And I ratify them before hand?

PHIL. One is that you avoid the lady Matilda and never repeat to her the same language you have written.

FRED. As to that—'tis done already.

PHIL. (*Severely.*) You unlucky dog! have you been doing more mischief since?

FRED. No matter—and the second condition is?

PHIL. That you try to make up matters with the Count De Beauvais—he has a right to be offended at that cursed letter, and the Countess desires you to make him an apology.

FRED. An apology! to my rival! the author of my evils! he who has always taken pleasure to humiliate me! apology! —I've called him out.

PHIL. You!

FRED. Yes, he has accepted my challenge, and this moment—

PHIL. (*With encreased emotion.*) You! fight him—you who know no more how to use a sword than a reaping hook!

FRED. No matter—'tis all the same to me.

PHIL. 'Tis to run to certain death.

FRED. Well, it cannot come at a better time—and thank heaven, I shall be a loss to no one!

PHIL. No! do you think I should not grieve for you?

FRED. (*Warmly, and taking his hand.*) Yes, yes—I am wrong—you, and you alone, Philip—you loved me,—I know it; I feel deeply the attachment you have ever shewn me; even now your eyes are filled with tears.

PHIL. Well,—in the name of that long attachment—by these tears which your rashness wrings from me—give up this mad design.

FRED. Give it up!

PHIL. (*With deep feeling.*) Frederick!—promised pride of my old age!—I entreat—I implore you on my knees—not, for the sake of the Countess, whose kindness you so ill requite: not, for Matilda, whom you are going to make more miserable than her aunt,—but for myself—for your poor old Philip—who rocked you in the cradle—who nursed you in his arms—for *his* sake, forget the empty speeches of a silly coxcomb.

FRED. Forget them—never!

PHIL. What is the subject of your quarrel?

FRED. I know not—but I must be revenged.

PHIL. What has he said?

FRED. I tell you, I know not; but I must have vengeance

—he loves—he is about to marry Matilda—but no more—he must not wait for me—quick, Philip, my sword.

PHIL. (*Coldly.*) No, sir.

FRED. How!

PHIL. You shall not stir a step.

FRED. What would you dare to say?

PHIL. That since you are deaf to my prayers—to the voice of true affection—since you have forgotten all your duties, I must do mine—you shall not leave this house.

FRED. And who can hinder me?

PHIL. I—you are my prisoner.

FRED. We'll soon see that.

(He takes his gloves, hat, and cane, which he had placed upon the table—Philip in the meantime locks the door and takes out the key.)

FRED. (*Observing him.*) How! have you the temerity?

PHIL. To save you in spite of yourself—yes, Sir—I have said you shall not leave the house, and I'll be d——d if I don't keep my word.

FRED. (*Angrily.*) What audacity!—Philip, give me that key.

PHIL. No.

FRED. (*With encreased irritation.*) Fear my rage.

PHIL. I fear nothing—and I forbid you.

FRED. You! forbid me!—this is beyond endurance—such insolence—

PHIL. (*Trying to retain him.*) Hold, I say—

FRED. (*Raising his cane.*) Must be chastised.

PHIL. Strike—wretched boy!—strike thy father.

FRED. My father!! (*Lets fall his cane.*)

PHIL. Yes: 'tis a secret, that for your sake I meant to have carried with me to the grave; and I have only betrayed it to spare you a crime.

FRED. I dare not raise my eyes.

PHIL. What! you blush, I suppose, to owe your being to an humble steward?

FRED. No, no, wound me not by such a thought.

PHIL. This steward was a soldier when you were born—this I sacrificed to stay beside my son—nay, for his advancement, I did not hesitate becoming his menial! his love was a full recompence for all.

(Frederick appears affected.)

FRED. (*Throwing himself into his arms.*) My father! my dearest father!—I have now a friend—a sacred tie—I'm no longer alone in the world.

(Again embracing Philip, who presses him tenderly in his arms.)

PHIL. (*Wiping his eyes.*) There, there—no more of this.

FRED. But one word more—my mother?

PHIL. Not another word upon this subject—it must remain a secret—a solemn promise—an oath—and now can you still refuse to obey me?

FRED. Can you ask it? am I not doubly bound to avenge my honor since I feel it is linked with yours.

PHIL. Leave that to me; does not a soldier know as well as you what honor demands?

FRED. (*Apart.*) Heavens! and that door is the only outlet—no possibility of escape. (*Aloud.*) have you no pity?

PHIL. In—in to your chamber, boy.

FRED. *(Hesitating.)* Oh, my father.

PHIL. *(With firmness.)* I command you.

FRED. I obey. [*With deep dejection—he enters the chamber on the right—Philip looking after him.*

PHIL. *(Alone.)* Yes, poor fellow—I can feel all he

suffers and I love him the more for it:—but they shall not rob me of the only blessing I have upon earth, and as the surest means to prevent it *(Unlocks door.)* I'll go—oh! here she comes.

Enter COUNTESS D'HARVILLE, R. H.

COUNTESS. Well, Philip, have you signified my commands?

PHIL. *(Pointing to door at left.)* Speak low, he's there.

COUNTESS. Frederick! *(Looking at Philip fixedly.)* but what's the matter?—you seem greatly agitated.

PHIL. I was in the nick of time—he was on the wing to fight a duel.

COUNTESS. (*Alarmed.*) A duel!

PHIL. With your nephew.

COUNTESS. Oh heavens! he must be prevented.

PHIL. I've done that already—he's a prisoner in his chamber, and until further orders there's nothing to fear—but to enforce my authority, I was obliged to tell him the right I had over him.

COUNTESS. Merciful powers!

PHIL. Don't be alarmed—your secret is still buried here. *(Putting his hand to his heart.)* But I must not deceive you—half measures do nothing—these young men have challenged each other, and sooner or later—

COUNTESS. In spite of your commands?

PHIL. Pooh! at their age, to forbid a lad of spirit to fight is only to make him the more eager to do so—I know what I felt at the bare thought of an insult—there is but one way that I see to prevent this misfortune—and you are the only person can bring it about.

COUNTESS. I! Philip.



PHIL. Yes—by removing the cause of their quarrel.

COUNTESS. How?

PHIL. Frederick loves your niece.

COUNTESS. I know it.

PHIL. The Count De Beauvais loves only her fortune—I don't think it would be a very difficult matter to make him give that up and his anger too—were you just to reason with him a little—as to Frederick I answer for him, if he but gain the hand of the girl.

COUNTESS. The hand of my niece! how can you propose such a thing?

PHIL. *(Coldly.)* You must do it.

COUNTESS. I dare not consent to such a union.

PHIL. You must do it, I say.

COUNTESS. Don't dream of it, Philip—what! furnish the world with arms against myself!

PHIL. What of that, when a life's at stake?

COUNTESS. I shall find other means to save him—but I can never consent to give him my niece.

PHIL. I ask it as a favor.

COUNTESS. No, I tell you. *(Haughtily.)* but no more of this, Philip, you are strangely forgetting what you owe me—and who you are.

PHIL. *(With suppressed indignation.)* Who I am! when a daughter of the house of D'Harville became a devoted victim to revoluntionary fury, a national soldier sprang from the crowd, and, mindful of former favours from the family, claimed her as his bride—his claim was founded on the blood he had lavished in the cause of liberty, and it was allowed—does your memory, Madam, recall this event?

COUNTESS. Yes.

PHIL. The fear of death is a strong tower of human

pride—misery causes even opposites to mingle—and the Countess D'Harville, the companion of nobles, became the wife of the humble Philip, a citizen and a soldier—am I, Madam, still correct?

COUNTESS. Yes.

PHIL. To gratify her family pride this marriage was kept secret—she became a mother—years passed on, France again bowed before a sovereign, the Countess D'Harville resumed her rank, and her unknown husband sank into her menial—as such he would still remain, but when he finds that the youthful hopes of two virtuous hearts are blighted by the pestilence of vanity, that the happiness of an excellent child is recklessly trampled upon, he throws off the servility of the dependant and insists on his rights as a father; his privileges as a man. Do your justice and feeling, Madam, now answer who I am, and how far I am your debtor?

COUNTESS. Philip, your accusation like your reasoning is drawn from false premises—no general good can be attained without individual sacrifice—your rank bars our son from inheriting the honors of my family: to my sphere he can never rise, the vain attempt could only unfit him for his own—a disclosure of his birth might compromise his happiness without offering an equivalent in return.

PHIL. Error, error—a vain error.

COUNTESS. A moment more—the duty I owe a long illustrious line of ancestors imperatively demands this silence, I dare not swerve from it: but, did you know the misery, the privation it causes, even you, my husband, would acquit me of sharing in this feeling: you style me vain, glorious and unnatural: I have thought that when my eyes filled, and my cheek glowed at casual mention of his name

that shame, the shame of pride, called forth the strong emotion—oh no, no, such tears a mother's eyes alone could shed: such blushes a mother's heart alone would cause when yearning to embrace and bless her first born, only child—some one comes—silence I implore you. (*Philip assumes a respectful air an* *ws a few paces.*)

Enter Jos. D.

Jos. Mr. Philip.

Countess. What is it you oseph?

Jos. Pardon me, my l Ir. Philip that I was looking for.

Phil. For me?

Jos. To give you this rter just brought up—if I had known my lady was here I wouldn't have ventured.

Phil. (*Receiving the letter and looking at it.*) But it has no address.

Jos. Oh, it's all one—I know it's for you—the lad that brought it desired it to be given to you immediately.

Phil. Very strange!

Countess. That's enough, Joseph, you may go.

(*Exit Joseph.*

Phil. (*Opening the letter.*) I don't know why—but I tremble to open it— (*Throws his eyes rapidly over the letter; and clasps his hands in agony.*) Good heavens!

Countess. What's the matter?

Phil. Frederick!—can it be! (*Lets the letter fall, and rushes into the inner chamber.*)

Countess. Frederick! what did he say—what new misfortune! (*She takes up the letter and reads rapidly.*) "My father, my only friend, pardon me for disobeying you, but now, less than ever, I cannot live under dishonor. The son of a soldier must not give any one the right to call him

a coward—the hour has struck—farewell, in a few moments I shall be avenged—or be no more."

PHILIP *re-enters—she runs towards him.*

Is it possible !—Frederick !

PHIL. Too true, too true—the window which opens upon the court was not fastened—he has escaped.

COUNTESS. Heavens !

PHIL. He is gone—and perhaps at this moment—*(Sobbing.)* My boy !—my dear boy !

COUNTESS. Philip.

PHIL. *(Totters into an arm chair.)* I shall never see him again—they'll murder him.

COUNTESS. *(Greatly agitated.)* No, no—there is still time to stop them—let them pursue—fly.

PHIL. Pursue—who knows what road they took ?

COUNTESS. No matter, they must be found. *(Runs to the door at bottom, which she opens with precipitation and calls.)* Morel, Joseph, Baptiste. *(She takes a bell from the table, and rings it violently, calling.)* Come, come quickly.

Enter JOSEPH, *and several Servants*, C. D.

COUNTESS. Where is my nephew ?

JOS. The Count ! he left the house long ago, Madam.

COUNTESS. And Frederick !—have you seen him go out ?

JOS. Yes, my lady, I was at the door—he got into a hired cabriolet.

COUNTESS. Which way did he take ?

JOS. I didn't take notice, my lady.

Enter MATILDA, *hastily*, L. H.

MAT. What is the matter, Aunt, has anything happened ?

COUNTESS. Nothing, child—but I wish to speak to the Count De Beauvais instantly. *(To the servants.)* Mount

all of you on horseback—search his house—the houses of his friends—let him be found wherever he may be—don't return without him.

Jos. But, my lady—

Countess. Tell him I wait for him—I must see him without a moment's delay—not a moment's—

Jos. And, my lady—

Countess. *(With energy.)* Go, and bring him along with you. [*Exeunt Servants precipitately*, C. D.

Mat. Bless me! Aunt, I never saw you so anxious about my cousin before—it must be something very important.

Countess. Yes, leave me—do, I pray you—I wish to be alone.

Mat. Well, I'm going, Aunt—I'm going. *(Aside.)* What can all this be about? [*Exit by door at bottom.*

Countess. *(Approaching Philip, who is still seated, overwhelmed with grief.)* Philip—rouse yourself—he'll be restored to us.

Phil. No, he has nothing but courage—and his adversary—I foresee it all—I shall never see him alive again.

Countess. (*Weeping.*) Frederick!—our dear child!

Phil. *(Looking at her fixedly, then reproachfully.)* That's the first time you ever called him so—our child!—ah! you weep now—but it's too late: it's all over.

Countess. *(Greatly affected.)* Well, I care not now who knows my shame—who hears me say, I love him with all a mother's love. How often have I felt my arms opening to press him to my bosom and call him my son!—but terror palsied them. Ah, Philip, if you could have read my heart—you would have pitied—pardoned me. My only consolation was to think of him, and study how I could best promote his fortune.

PHIL. *(With bitterness.)* Fortune! money! yes, you great ones of the world think that's a substitute for all—*(He rises.)* 'Twas a mother you ought to have given him.

COUNTESS. *(In a suppliant tone.)* Ah, spare me!

PHIL. You loved him—and he never knew it.

COUNTESS. Philip!

PHIL. He will die without one maternal embrace!

COUNTESS. No, no—he will not die; heaven will pity us, and preserve him:—Matilda, my fortune—my life! I would give all to restore us Frederick.

PHIL. Much use, now! *(He listens.)*

COUNTESS. Well—do you hear any thing?

PHIL. Hush! listen, 'tis the sound of a carriage—

COUNTESS. And stops at my door? *(They look at each other in silence—Giving her hand to Philip.)* Why do you tremble? doubtless, 'tis he—'tis Frederick!

PHIL. Expiring—perhaps.

COUNTESS. Suspense is intolerable—I must know at once —*(She rushes towards the door and encounters Matilda.*

Enter MATILDA *joyously*, L. H.

MAT. Be tranquil, aunt—he's there.

PHIL. *and* COUNTESS. Who?

MAT. Your nephew—

COUNTESS. *(Sinking in the arm chair.)* Ah!—'tis all over.

MAT. Was ever anything so extraordinary—you were all anxiety to see him awhile ago, and now he's come—Good heavens!—help, help—Philip! [*Observing Philip.*] But you seem to want help yourself.

PHIL. He comes—so much the better—he shall kill me also or—I'll have his life.

[*He goes towards the door, Matilda interposes.*

MAT. Philip!



COUNTESS. Stay.

Enter COUNT DE BEAUVAIS *by door at bottom.*

OMNES. He's here!

PHIL. (*Overwhelmed.*) And alone—no longer a doubt.

COUNTESS. I die!

COUNT. (*Gaily.*) Bless my soul, what's the matter here? all as pale as ghosts! (*Approaching the Countess.*) what—and you're crying your eyes out for me, 'gad I never thought I was of so much consequence—highly flattered 'pon honor. But you may put up your pocket handkerchief now you see I'm here.

PHIL. (*Approaching him—with grief.*) And Frederick?

MAT. (*Alarmed.*) Frederick!

PHIL. (*With rage to Count.*) Follow me.

COUNT. (*Astonished.*) Hey!—what is he at.

PHIL. Follow me, I say.

COUNT. To his assistance!—no occasion, his wound is nothing—a mere scratch.

COUNTESS. How!

MAT. His wound!

PHIL. (*With joy.*) Is he only wounded?

COUNT. That's all—and but slightly—contrary to my usual custom.

OMNES. Is it possible!

PHIL. (*Almost ready to embrace him.*) You don't deceive me?

COUNT. I! no such thing i'faith—if he had had my address 'tis a thousand to one that he wasn't a dead man; but you see, the boy knows nothing—absolutely nothing; and for that very reason, 'gad he had nearly settled me.

PHIL. How!



COUNT. You shall hear—it was the most superlatively curious—well—at the first onset I grazed him in the hand—mere scratch, however I paused and told him 'twas enough'—'enough,' cried he, resuming his position, 'no, Sir, one of us must never leave this spot—defend yourself.' With that he threw himself upon me, like a perfect bedlamite—without grace—without method—and, what is absolutely incredible to any one acquainted with the principles, and who kills by rule, at the moment I cried to him to hold fast his sword, he makes mine jump out of my hand.

PHIL. What disarmed you?

COUNT. Contrary to all the rules, both old and new. I perceive however he has disordered my dress a little, that's perfectly incompatible with good fencing, and never to be forgiven. I remember the last antagonist I put hors de combat by a thrust in carte over arm, returned me thanks for my superlative skill in not disturbing the ecqnomy of his dress. Adieu till dinner time—au revoir. [*Exit*, R. H.

COUNTESS. My brave boy.

PHIL. He's myself—every inch a soldier.

Enter FREDERICK, *his arm in black handkerchief*, C. D.

OMNES. (*Running to meet him.*) Frederick!

FRED. (*Throwing himself into the arms of Philip.*) My friend—my fa—

PHIL. (*Interrupting him.*) There, there—that's enough (*Apart, looking at him with pride.*) My brave boy.

FRED. You forgive me?

MAT. (*Who approaches him.*) I don't I assure you, Frederick, how could you give one such a fright—

COUNTESS. (*Alone, and apart from the rest.*) And to me he says nothing—he thinks I require no consolation.

FRED. Matilda., my own worshipp'd Matilda!

MAT. Frederick!

FRED. Start not, 'tis the last time these lips must so profane the name—my future fate is fixed—a few brief hours and I quit a home in which my youthful years were sheltered: friends on whom my every hope was fixed—with that intensity of feeling the outcast and the orphan alone can know—yet, ere I go, let me (*Kneeling to Countess.*) once more press a hand to which the tottering steps of childhood clung, a hand swift in gift, yet ever slow in punishment, which, open as the owner's soul, has heaped upon me the munificence of the patron and shielding watchfulness of the parent—you weep, Madam—if your eyes thus fill at that tender name what must this lone heart now suffer at the bereavement of the only friend it ever claimed—the only mother that it ever knew?

COUNTESS. Ah, my child, in truth as well as love—my son!

FRED. You my mother!

COUNTESS. Ah, my son, my son,—(*Embrace.*) ask me not now why this has so long been secret—I cannot speak—Matilda shall answer for me. (*Joins their hands—they kneel.*) Philip, our son—our son implores your blessing.

PHIL. (*Pointing to above.*) And may it be registered there, as truly as I bestow it here.

CURTAIN FALLS.

Erratum, page 10, *after line* 7.

PHIL. I'm wrong, young lady, very wrong—but an old soldier finds it hard to learn the oily jargon of a gentleman of the chamber.

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J. R. PLANCHÉ.

Nov. 10*th*, 1834.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Philip *(Duke of Orleans, Regent of France)*, MR. VINING
The Abbé Dubois *(his Minister)* ..... MR. BARTLEY
Porto Carrero *(Secretary to the Spanish Ambassador)* ..... MR. BAKER
Captain D'Aubigny ..... MR. COOPER
Verdier *(Page to the Regent)*..... MR. MEARS

The Duchess du Maine..... MRS. NEWCOMBE
Rose ..... MRS. H. CRAMER
Justine ..... MRS. HUMBY
Lisette ..... MISS LEE
Marton ..... MISS MURRAY
Julie ..... MRS. CHESTER
Fanchon ..... MISS SOMERVILLE.



THE REGENT.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

Chamber in a Tavern near Paris. Door in flat.

Enter the DUCHESS DU MAINE *and* PORTO CARRERO, *both in the common citizen costume of the period.*

DUCH. This way, and speak low.

PORTO. Truly a singular place to fix on for a political conference—a common tavern beyond the barriers of Paris—the holiday rendezvous of all the grisettes and apprentices in the city.

DUCH. You received my note?

PORTO. *(Pointing to his dress)* Ecce signum! as your highness desired, you behold the Spanish Ambassador's principal secretary in the dress of an honest citizen of Paris.

DUCH. What news from Perpignan?

PORTO. The governor is our's, and, for the stipulated sum, will open the gates to the troops of Philip the Fifth.

DUCH. Excellent! But, ere we proceed further, tell me, frankly—that is, as frankly as may become an ambassador's secretary—do you think I may depend upon the promises of Cardinal Alberoni?

PORTO. Are not your interests the same? Provided the young king, Louis the Fifteenth, is declared the ward of Spain, the Cardinal consents to delegate the actual power to his highness the Duke du Maine, and, as your influence over your husband is unbounded—

DUCH. 'Tis I, in fact, who will govern France,—as in justice I should; for the regency is our's by right; bequeathed to us in the last will of Louis the Fourteenth, and, but for the weakness of my husband, and the intrigues of the Abbé Dubois,—whom I hate almost as much as I do his patron, Philip of Orleans,—could not have been wrested from us!

PORTO. The impudence of that Dubois is immeasurable!

DUCH. Except by his cunning and his profligacy. He is surely some demon incarnate; for he is always gaming, yet never loses—always drinking, yet never drunk—always intriguing, yet never in love.

PORTO. The son of a village apothecary!—he aspires to the highest dignities of the church.

DUCH. Oh, yes! he would be Archbishop of Cambray, and the Regent is to use his influence to get him a cardinal's hat. But the Regent must make haste, for, if all goes well, Philip of Orleans will be this very night on his road to Spain.

PORTO. To night! Seize him in Paris?—in the midst of his guards and his friends? for he has many; notwithstanding his follies and dissipations, the conqueror of Steinkirk is still popular! Beware, madam—so bold a step may ruin the whole scheme.

DUCH. Who spoke of seizing him in Paris, in the midst of his partizans? It is here, in the gardens of this humble

tavern, that we shall lay hands upon this royal roué—he will be here within an hour.

PORTO. The Regent—in this tavern!

DUCH. Alone, unattended—in pursuit of a little grisette, of whom he is passionately enamoured. By a most fortunate accident, one of my spies became informed of their assignation; for he has not even trusted his worthy confidant, Dubois, upon this occasion. I immediately secured this apartment; from a window in that closet we can overlook the gardens, and, at night, as he attempts to leave them—

PORTO. By our Lady of the Pillar! But have you a coach?

DUCH. A hired one—a common fiacre—to prevent suspicion, but with the swiftest horses in my own stable. A strong escort, well mounted and armed, is concealed in the wood, and relays are ready all along the road. He cannot escape us.

(A knock at the door.)

PORTO. Some one comes!

DUCH. 'Tis a young officer, who considers himself ill-used by the government. He is pledged to obey me, but I have not entrusted him with this portion of my plan.

(Opens the door.)

Enter D'AUBIGNY.

D'AUB. *(Seeing* PORTO CARRERO.) Your pardon. *(Retiring)*

DUCH. Enter, sir, and fear not. This gentleman is of our way of thinking. What success at the Louvre?

D'AUB. I have sounded several officers, who, like myself, have served under the Duke du Maine, and they profess

themselves devoted to your highness; but one express stipulation is, that there shall be no foreign interference. The first Spanish soldier that crosses the frontier ends the league between us.

DUCH. *(Looking at* PORTO CARRERO.) You may assure them, sir, that nothing of the kind is meditated. Our only object is to liberate his majesty from the odious restraint now imposed upon him by the self-elected governors, and thereby give peace and happiness to France.

PORTO. *(Aside and smiling.)* Of course, all disturbances have peace for their object.

DUCH. Your services shall be rewarded by the regiment you desire, and there may be other modes of proving to you our gratitude.

D'AUB. I confess, madam, that I have private and personal motives for my conduct. I am most anxious to become independent of my family, by carving out new distinctions and fortune for myself, that I may freely share them with the choice of my heart;—and the barefaced sale of the rank which was my due to a creature of the Abbé Dubois, at such a moment—

DUCH. Take comfort, sir; you shall be righted and revenged. This letter to the president, that the council may be ready to assemble at the first signal. Tell your friends to be prepared for a bold step, and return in an hour's time for further instructions.

D'AUB. You shall be obeyed, madam. *(Going.)*

DUCH. Stay,—are you acquainted with the person of the Regent?

D'AUB. No, madam; this is my first visit to Paris, and I have never seen him, to my knowledge.



DUCH. 'Tis no matter; you may go, sir. (D'AUBIGNY *bows, and exit.*) Come, let us to the window, and see if he has arrived.

PORTO. That young man may give us some trouble.

DUCH. Fear him not. He is a mere wheel, which I have set in motion, and will only know the hour, to which he helps to move the hand, by the clock striking. He may stop then as soon as he pleases.

(*Exeunt* DUCHESS *and* PORTO CARRERO.)

SCENE II.

The Gardens of the Tavern.

On R. H., *the house, a window of which is conspicuous.*

Enter, from the house, CAPT. D'AUBIGNY.

D'AUB. So; behold me fairly embarked in a conspiracy. Yet, after all, it is but to overthrow an obnoxious minister, and therefore, in fact, a plot to serve the king; but to serve him against his will may be called treason, and the penalty of treason is—well, no matter, I have set my all upon this cast, and if I can but discover some trace of my dear Rose—(*laugh without*)—can it be possible—that form—at the very moment when—it is! it must be she! Oh, fortune! But who are those with her? let me observe. (*Stands aside.*)

Enter ROSE, *followed by* JUSTINE, LISETTE, FANCHON, *and* JULIE, *with baskets.*

ROSE. This way, this way—the prettiest place is down that walk.

Jus. Stop a bit—stop a bit!—has any body paid the coach?

Rose. To be sure—I have.

Jus. That's right, for I've no money—I'll pay next time.

Lis. I'm sure you will, for I've heard you say so twenty times, at least.

Jus. Indeed, Mistress Nimbletongue! You never had grace enough to make the offer. Who'll lend me a pin to fasten my kerchief—don't all speak at once.

Rose. Here—here.

Jus. Thank you, my dear. Ah! if every body was as good-natured as Mademoiselle Rose—

Lis. How fond we should all be of Mademoiselle Justine!

Jus. I'd have you to know, Mademoiselle Lisette—

Rose. Come, come—I wont have any quarrelling. We came out to be all merry and friendly together, and those who don't choose to be so may go and dine by themselves—they shan't join our party. Where's Marton? why is she not with us?

Lis. Oh, she told me she was going to dine with her aunt, and so I said nothing to her about our party. But where's Monsieur François all this while? It's mighty gallant, to let us arrive before him, I will say.

Jus. Suppose he should not come at all!

Rose. Oh, he's sure to come—some business has detained him at his office; a clerk, you know, cannot command his time.

Lis. Oh, of course *you'll* find an excuse for him.

Jus. Well, and very right too; he's very kind to her, I'm sure—and so he is to us all, for the matter of that. He's a very nice man—that he is; he's promised me a whole

piece of peach-coloured ribbon, and said he should take my cheeks for the pattern—wasn't that pretty now?

LIS. Pretty well, for a lawyer's clerk.

JUS. A lawyer's clerk! Bless my stars! How grand we are, since a Captain of musqueteers chucked us under the chin!

LIS. What's that you say, mademoiselle?

ROSE. Ladies! Ladies! I must request—you two are always squabbling—follow me, all of you, through these trees, and—(*sees* D'AUBIGNY, *who advances*)—Mercy on me! —Captain D'Aubigny!

D'AUB. Rose!

ROSE. You in Paris?

D'AUB. I arrived but last week from Dijon;—but may I speak with you for a moment alone?

JUS. O, to be sure, sir. Come away, ladies, directly.

LIS. We wouldn't intrude for the world. (*Aside to* ROSE.) What will Monsieur François say?

ROSE. O, this is an old friend—almost a relation—

LIS. Aye, aye—a cousin! we know. (*Aside.*) A captain, too! Well, I'm sure—some marching regiment—nothing like the musqueteers.

JUS. There's a swing in the garden—let's all go and swing in the swing!

ALL. Yes, yes—the swing!—the swing!

JUS. The first there shall have the first ride! one—two—three, and away!

(*All scamper out, leaving* ROSE *with* D'AUBIGNY.)

D'AUB. Dearest Rose, this meeting—I can hardly believe my senses. But who are those girls, and why do I find you here?

ROSE. They work in the same shop with me; and, to-day being a holyday—

D'AUB. Work!—shop! What is this I hear!

ROSE. You did not know I was at Paris, then?

D'AUB. I only knew you had quitted Dijon suddenly, without explaining your motives to any one; and I had sought in vain for some trace of your steps.

ROSE. You had not forgotten me, then?

D'AUB. Forgotten you!—Absence has but increased my passion!—I love you more fondly than ever!

ROSE. I am sorry to hear it!

D'AUB. How?

ROSE. Hear me, Monsieur D'Aubigny, and patiently, I entreat you. Born on your mother's estate—indebted to her for education and protection—I loved you from my earliest childhood, without dreaming of the distance fortune had placed between us! When, on the death of your dear mother, you quitted Dijon for the army—your uncle by accident witnessed our parting, and, alarmed at the prospect of such a connexion for his nephew, sought our cottage the next morning, and, after shewing me the folly I had been guilty of, conjured me, by the memory of my benefactress, not to degrade her son in the eyes of his family, and render him, perhaps, miserable for life!

D'AUB. My uncle?

ROSE. I felt the force of his arguments. I knew your expectations from your uncle—your dependence upon his pleasure. My love was not a selfish love, Henry, and I determined instantly to quit Dijon for ever. I sought in Paris a relation who would have protected me. Alas! she was no more! Alone—without resources—in this great city, what

was I to do? I had been taught embroidery, and I offered my services at the first shop that presented itself. They were accepted, and I am now honestly earning a small income, happy in (at least) the approval of my own conscience.

D'Aub. And you have done this for my sake!—generous girl! But I will suffer this no longer. I claim your promise—the fulfilment of the pledge you gave me at our parting. And, despite my uncle—despite the whole world—

Rose. Stay—stay! you have not heard all. It cannot be. I—do not be angry, Henry—but—

D'Aub. But what, Rose? Ah!—do I guess rightly!—oh, no! no!—tell me not you love another!

Rose. Captain D'Aubigny—

D'Aub. (*Frantically.*) You love another!

Rose. Say it were true—

D'Aub. True!

Rose. Why should I blush to avow it to my friend—my brother?

D'Aub. (*Bitterly.*) Your brother—

Rose. You can never be more to me, Henry. Though I am poor, I am proud—though lowly born, I have too high a spirit to enter a family that despises me! No, young as I am—ignorant of the world as I am—I have learned enough to know that equality of rank is one of the best guarantees of happiness in married life. And I frankly own to you, there is a man who loves me dearly—a kind-hearted, worthy man—almost as poor as I am—gaining his livelihood as I do mine—by humble, but honest, exertion—one who need not blush to call me his wife, or pain me by the recollection of



sacrifices made for my sake! Captain D'Aubigny, believe me, it is for the good of both—I am pledged to another.

D'Aub. And this is my reward! I must hear this—I, who, to become independent of my family, and thereby remove all obstacles to our union, have even now endangered—

Rose. Endangered!—What, speak you of danger?

D'Aub. I know not what I say!—'tis nothing—nothing! Perhaps one day—I loiter here too long. I have a duty to perform; but I will return—return and face this rival!

Rose. What would you do?

D'Aub. Dispute his right!—I have a prior claim! Your first vows were mine, and I will not believe you faithless to them!—no human force shall rob me of your love!—or—if so—I will not survive the loss of it! (*Exit* D'Aubigny.)

Rose. Captain D'Aubigny!—Henry!—He is gone. Alas, alas! I pity him sincerely; but reflection will, I am sure, convince him, and then he will be again my friend—my brother. O, yes, yes,—he is so good, so generous, so amiable! He is not so gay and agreeable as François, certainly; but then François has nothing to disturb his gaiety. (*Laugh without.*) Hark! his laugh was amongst them, I'm sure!—yes, here he comes, with Justine and the whole party. How fortunate he did not meet D'Aubigny; for, though he is but a clerk, he has a great deal of spirit.

Enter the Regent, *plainly, but neatly, dressed, a blue cloak over his arm; he is surrounded by* Justine *and* Lisette *and the other girls.*

Jus. My ribbons!—my ribbons!—my ribbons, Monsieur François!



LIS. And my sweetmeats!—my sweetmeats, Monsieur François!

JUL. And what you promised me, Monsieur François!

FAN. And me!—and me!—and me, Monsieur François!

REG. Silence in the court!—Here's a coil!—if you don't let me out, I'll kiss you all round. (*They don't move.*) Pshaw! what a fool I am,—I mean I wont kiss one of you! (*They separate.*) So! I thought that would bring you to your senses. There, Mademoiselle Justine, is your ribbon; but your complexion is not to be matched in Paris. (*Salutes her as he gives the parcel.*) And there, Mademoiselle Lisette, are your sweetmeats; and here are mine. (*Kissing her.*) And here, Julie, is what I promised you—(*giving parcel*)—and this is what you promised me. (*Kissing her.*) And here—(*to* FANCHON)—

ROSE. "And here, and here," indeed!—and here am *I*, Monsieur François. Do you know what you are doing, sir?

REG. (*Aside to her.*) What I used to do at school, my love—saving the nicest morsel for the last—(*gives parcel to and salutes* FANCHON, *then returning to* ROSE)—for thee, dearest Rose, I have brought nothing but a rose. (*Taking one from his bosom.*) 'Tis out of the royal gardens, though—and one of the rarest in them. I knew thou hadst a taste for flowers, and I could find nothing made by art worthy of the perfection of nature. (*Kisses her hand respectfully.*)

LIS. Perfection!—ahem! If he knew about the captain? (*To* JUSTINE.)

JUS. Be quiet, do!—how would you like it yourself?

ROSE. What made you so late?

REG. O, don't talk of it; I've been harassed to death—so much business to get through.

JUS. What sort of business—all writing?

REG. A good deal of it; but every thing is laid on my shoulders—I've the responsibility of the whole office.

LIS. And what d'ye get a day for it—a crown?

REG. Not quite;—the next above me has that.

JUS. And don't do half so much work, I'll be bound.

REG. You're right there.

LIS. It's always the case. And where is your office?

REG. Near the Palais Royal.

JUS. And do you live there?

REG. Close by. You must all come some evening, and sup with me.

ALL. Oh, that we will.

JUS. I like visiting a bachelor—it's such fun! One turns every thing topsyturvy! Oh! see there!—see there!

ROSE. What's the matter?

JUS. See who's coming!

LIS. As I live, 'tis Marton after all,—and with a beau!

ROSE. A young man!

JUS. Lud, no!—quite an old fright!

LIS. And she vowed to me she was going to dine with her aunt.

REG. Well, and now she's taking a walk with her uncle,—that's all.

LIS. Her uncle!—she hasn't got one, I know!—we've caught her out!

JUS. She doesn't know we're here!—back—back!—we'll have such fun! (*All retire cautiously amongst the trees.*)



Enter the ABBE DUBOIS, *dressed as a French tradesman, escorting* MARTON.

DUB. Eh! house there, garçon!—What has become of all the waiters, I wonder—nobody in attendance!

REG. (*Aside, and peeping.*) Dubois! By all that's delicious!—the old sinner!

MAR. (*Affectedly.*) One can never get proper attention in these low places. I am surprised, Mons. Prudhomme, you should have brought a lady to such an ungenteel tavern, where one never sees anybody better than a stay-maker or a shopboy.

DUB. (*Aside.*) That's the very reason. Nobody knows me here. (*Aloud.*) Pardon me, charming Marton; but thou hast thine own beauty to blame for it. Think'st thou I would risk its display amongst the courtiers and fine gentlemen of Paris? What chance would thy poor devoted servant stand beside the laced and feathered rakes and roués of the Palais Royal? No, Marton, my Venus!—my pearl! If thou lovest me, we can be as happy here, in these humble bowers, unknown—unmolested. (*The* REGENT, *who has approached the* ABBE *unperceived, while* JUSTINE *and the others have surrounded* MARTON, *here touches him on the shoulder.*) Who the plague are you, sir? (*Aside.*) The Regent! (JUSTINE *and others burst into a laugh.*)

ALL. (*Curtseying to* MARTON.) Delighted to see you, Mademoiselle Marton.

JUS Couldn't have supposed, though, you would have condescended to come to such a low place!

LIS. Where one never sees anybody better than a stay-maker!

MAR. (*Aside.*) Provoking! (*Aloud.*) My dear friends! quite enchanted at this meeting. Who could have thought—

LIS. Who, indeed, when you were engaged to dine with your aunt! How is the dear old lady?

JUS. Is that she, in the brown coat and black wig?

MAR. (*Aside.*) Impertinent minx! (*Aloud.*) Dear girl, how I envy you your excellent spirits! This is my uncle, Monsieur Prudhomme.

ALL. (*Stifling a laugh.*) Uncle? Oh! ho!

MAR. (*Continuing.*) A highly respectable upholsterer—

REG. And cabinet-maker. I have long had the pleasure of his acquaintance; but never till now knew there was so much beauty in the family. 'Twas strange I should guess, though, that Mademoiselle Marton had an uncle of some sort.

DUB. (*Aside to him.*) Your Highness——

REG. (*Aside to him.*) Silence!

MAR. (*To* DUBOIS.) You know Monsieur François, then?

DUB. Monsieur François? Oh, yes, I know Monsieur François. I—I—

REG. I am indebted to him for my present situation.

DUB. The obligation is mutual. He set me up in business.

ROSE. You, François! Had you ever the money to—

REG. Money! oh dear, no; but I recommended him to a good job or so, when he was only a journeyman joiner. The lod boy is now as rich as a Jew, and works for the king.

DUB. (*With a bow to the* REGENT.) And all the Royal Family.

JUS. Law! Then perhaps you furnished the Palais Royal for the Regent? They say it's magnificent.

LIS. Yes, and that the Regent's a capital customer. You may charge him what you please, if you don't ask him for the money.

DUB. (*Coughing.*) Ahem! ahem!

MAR. Not but what he flings away plenty at play, and in all sorts of wickedness.

DUB. Ahem! ahem!

JUL. Oh! he's a shocking spendthrift, and a dreadful libertine—the ruin of all the poor girls he meets with.

DUB. Ahem! ahem! Some say the girls are the ruin of him.

JUS. Well, now, I like the Regent. I'm told he's very handsome, and very goodnatured, and as brave as a lion; and it's only his bad advisers that ruin him.

REG. (*Coughing, and nudging* DUBOIS.) Ahem! ahem!

MAR. Yes, there's that Abbé Dubois, for instance, his Prime Minister—

REG. Ahem! ahem!

MAR. Who is quite as great a rake as the Regent himself, though twice as old; and an Abbé, too, and as ugly as sin.

REG. Ahem! ahem!

JUS. Yes, the nasty old fright, I've heard of his tricks; and he's just as stingy as the Regent is generous.

ALL. Oh! he's a shocking bad man.

REG. Oh! an abominable character!

LIS. An old fool!

DUB. Fool! halt there, if you please. I'll give him up on the other points—as ugly, and as stingy, and as wicked as you like; but the man who, from nothing, has become Prime Minister; who has held in check the ambition of Cardinal Alberoni; who, in spite of a thousand obstacles, has

completed so great a treaty as the Triple Alliance, may be a knave if you will; but a fool?—no! and I will not stand here and——

MAR. Bless me, Monsieur Prudhomme, how warmly you take his part!

REG. He expects to furnish his palace when he is a cardinal; but that will never be.

DUB. It will—it must be. The Regent has promised to write to the Pope.

REG. The Regent will never have the impudence.

JUS. Oh! as to that, he has impudence enough for anything; but, hang the Regent and his Minister—I'm dying for my dinner, and here we stand chattering politics.

REG. Aye! aye! hang the Regent — and his Minister especially! To dinner!—to dinner! I suppose we shall join forces—eh, Mr. ——What the devil's your name?

(*Aside to* DUBOIS.)

DUB. (*Aside.*) Prudhomme! (*Aloud.*) Oh, to be sure. Waiter! We can't find a waiter.

ROSE. What do we want with a waiter? We are all going to wait on ourselves—to dine amongst the trees yonder on the grass.

JUS. To be sure; and we're all to make ourselves handy. I'm to lay the cloth; François to draw the corks; and, what shall Monsieur Prudhomme do?

LIS. Oh, he shall dress the salade.

DUB. I!

REG. It'll be a confoundedly sour one, I can see, by his face.

JUS. Oh, nonsense! What's he good for if he can't dress a salade?



REG. Oh, what indeed!

JUST. If he doesn't know how, he must be taught; and if he behaves himself I'll sing him the new song about his friend the Minister:—

"Hey! hey! Monsieur l'Abbé,
You'll go to the devil instead of Cambray."

"Amen," I say.

DUB. Much obliged.

MAR. Oh, but there's a better than that:—

"The Abbé Dubois would a cardinal be;
But the devil with triumph grins,
For, instead of the cardinal virtues, he
Has sent him the deadly sins!"

(*All laugh but* DUBOIS.)

ROSE. Come along, and get the things out of the baskets; François, go and order the wine.

(*The girls run out with their baskets, laughing, and leaving the* REGENT *with* DUBOIS.)

REG. "Hey! hey! Monsieur l'Abbé!" you've fallen amongst friends, it appears.

DUB. To think of meeting his Royal Highness Philip Duke of Orleans, and Regent of France, in a common guingette!

REG. Why not as likely as his Reverend Tutor and Counsellor, William Dubois, Abbé of St. Just, Minister and Secretary of State, and Cardinal Archbishop of Cambray—in expectation?

DUB. I am the son of a village apothecary; you are the nephew of Louis XIV.

REG. But I am in love, and you are not, I'll be sworn, whatever you pretend to be.

DUB. In love!—with a grisette?

REG. Really, passionately, respectfully, in love! You may laugh, but it is a fact. And the proof is, that I should never have entrusted you with my secret had you not stumbled upon me thus. It is now nearly a month since, walking one evening in the Thuilleries, I saw half-a-dozen of our young nobility scampering up and down one of the alleys, laughing prodigiously. I advanced towards them to share in their mirth, when a beautiful young creature, pale and trembling, broke from the grasp of one who had tried to intercept her, and threw herself almost into my arms, exclaiming, "Ah, sir, you look like an honest man, for mercy's sake, protect an innocent girl from insult." A sign from me, of course, dispersed the party,—and imagine with what interest I gazed upon the lovely face and perfect form of my youthful and weeping protegée.

DUB. (*Taking a pinch of snuff.*) I can easily do so. Your Highness's interest was not likely to be checked by your Highness's principle.

REG. Thou art mistaken, Monsieur Dubois. Even thy teaching has failed in making me a perfect scoundrel. Her candour, her evident alarm, and the full confidence she reposed in my honour, inspired me with a respect and affection I have been long a stranger to. I was plainly dressed, and she had no suspicion of my rank. I saw her to her lodgings; left her in the care of her friends; and have since seen her daily, under the name of François, and in the character of a clerk in a notary's office. I love her to madness!

DUB. (*drily*) So it appears.

REG. And she has acknowledged I am not indifferent to her.



DUB. She is very kind.

REG. On the contrary she is very cruel; she has no idea but of marriage.

DUB. What a pity your highness has already a wife.

REG. Nay, 'tis almost fortunate, for I positively fear that, sooner than lose her—

DUB. You would marry a milliner, and impale three thimbles, argent, with the fleurs-de-lis of France.

REG. Ridiculous!

DUB. If the heralds objected, she could stitch the coats together herself.

REG. Laugh as you please, mine she must be. I will declare my rank, and try if it be possible to dazzle her into yielding.

DUB. Have a care; love is a strange thing—it will not be commanded.

REG. At any rate, you are not Love—and I command *you*, on your allegiance, to second me in this affair—you must think of nothing else.

DUB. Nothing else! and Cardinal Alberoni—who is moving heaven and earth—

REG. Hang Alberoni.

DUB. I should prefer it, as the shorter way, but that's impossible. Then there's the Duchess du Maine, who is in league with him.

REG. I don't believe it. You are always teazing me about plots and conspiracies. I will hear of no plot but that which is to secure me this cruel beauty.

DUB. Well, well, I'll do my best.

REG. You are the prince of abbés.

DUB. Your highness's pardon, I am but the abbé of a prince.

REG. Hush! They return.

Re-enter JUSTINE, *with a sallad-bowl and a napkin.*

JUS. Well! Well! What are you loitering here for? Run directly, Monsieur Francois, and make yourself useful! (*beats him out with the napkin.*) And here's your work (*giving* DUBOIS *the bowl*), dress that sallad nicely, or Mademoiselle Marton, your *niece*, says you shall never come out with her again.

DUB. (*Aside.*) If this is to be the rule when I do—

JUS. I do believe you're too proud, and don't like the fun of a pic-nic party. Why, bless you, much greater people than you delight in it. Even to-day, one of the waiters here tells me, that there's a lady of quality—dressed just like one of us—come to dine here with a great lord, in disguise also.

DUB. (*Aside.*) The devil! If they should see us! (*Aloud*) A lady of quality—Do they know who she is?

JUS. No; but somebody told Fritot, the cook, that they saw her get out of a coach in the middle of the wood, and speak to a party of men on horseback with an air of command that—

DUB. Men on horseback! Soldiers?

JUS. Soldiers, or servants, he didn't know which, they were all so cloaked up—but no doubt some of her suite. Go on with that sallad, do!

DUB. Yes, yes, but I'm curious to know who the lady can be who keeps an assignation with an escort of cavalry. A great lord, you say, in disguise, too?

Jus. Oh! they only suppose he's a lord, from his coming to meet a lady.

Dub. Poor ignorant souls! he's as likely to be a footman! Are they about the gardens?

Jus. No; they are in that room now.

Dub. Zounds! they can see us from that window, then!

Jus. Well, what of that? They'll see you spoil a good sallad, to be sure. Give it me, do.

Dub. Aye, there's a darling. Dress it, while I just take a peep.

Jus. Oh dear! oh dear! and they call women curious!

Dub. (*Who has stolen round, and peeped in at a corner of the window.*) There they are, sure enough, in deep conversation. Who on earth can they be? Why, no—yes—as I live! The Duchess du Maine! So! So! Is this an intrigue now—or a conspiracy?—in either case, a lucky discovery! But the man—the man—he keeps his back towards me.

Jus. Well! Do you know who she is?

Dub. Hush! Hush! I think I do. A customer of mine. I wouldn't have her see me for the world. (*Aside.*) Who the deuce is the man? He rises—now I shall have him! By all that's suspicious—Porto Carrero!—the Spanish ambassador's secretary!—Here's mischief to a certainty. Some desperate blow is intended!—and the Regent and myself here—without guards—without friends—what's to be done!

Jus. What ails the man? Monsieur Prudhomme!

Dub. Silence, my dear girl! A most serious affair!

Jus. Serious! What, is it a footman, then? Or—oh mercy!—Monsieur Prudhomme!—Perhaps the lady is a love

of your's, and you're jealous. Ha! ha! ha! if I don't tell Marton!

DUB. Tell the Devil! (*Aside.*) I must find the Regent! The Duchess du Maine!—Porto Carrero!—Horsemen in cloaks!—What will become of us? (*Rushes out.*)

JUS. Well, of all the rude bears!—"Tell the devil," indeed!—and leave me to carry all the things!—an ugly, impudent old man! I declare, if I wasn't so hungry, I wouldn't sit down in his company, for all he's the king's cabinet-maker. Tell me to "tell the devil!" He'll go to him long before *I* shall, and so he may tell him himself. (*Exit* JUSTINE.)

Enter PORTO CARRERO, *from the house, with a* MAN *enveloped in a mantle.*

PORTO. You will find him in that direction—you cannot mistake—he is the only man that—stay—by Santiago!—yes—there he is—crossing that walk—in a blue cloak—one of the new-fashioned Steinkirks. Watch him closely, and, when he departs, manage that your coach is the one hired for him. The moment he is in it, wait for nothing. The escort is sure to follow. He comes. He must not see me. (*Exit* PORTO CARRERO.)

(*The* MAN *retires as the* REGENT *enters.*)

REG. Where is that cursed Dubois? To be out of the way at such a moment. If I could see any one who would get me a coach to the garden-gate—(*A waiter passes.*) Here, friend! (*To waiter.*) Canst get me a coach to the gate yonder?



MAN. (*Advancing.*) A coach, did you say, sir? I'll bring mine round directly.

REG. That's a fine fellow—to the garden-gate there—(*Exeunt Waiter and* MAN, *separately.*) Now, if I can but manage to lead Rose insensibly in that direction—she comes!

Enter ROSE.

ROSE. Now, dear François, what is this secret you would tell me? Make haste, for Monsieur Prudhomme is looking for you, and I've sent him another way, that he might not interrupt us.

REG. (*Aside.*) Aye, hang him, he'll come now that I no longer want him. (*Aloud.*) Dearest Rose—I have longed for this moment—but even here we may be overheard—and what I have to say is of the greatest importance.

ROSE. Indeed! Is it about our marriage? Have you got your employer's consent?

Enter D'AUBIGNY, *unseen by the* REGENT *or* ROSE.

REG. I have nearly succeeded—but—a few steps this way, and—

ROSE. Nay, nay, tell me here. It is getting dusk, and I do not like to stray further from our party. They will be sure to make remarks, and—

REG. What have you to fear? Are you not with your own acknowledged lover—your husband?

D'AUB. (*Advancing*) No!

ROSE. Henry!

REG. (*Aside.*) Confusion! (*Aloud.*) Who are you, sir? And what mean you by this interruption?

D'AUB. (*Aside to him.*) To protect that young and inno-

cent girl from the designs of a libertine—for though I know not who you are, I have strong suspicions of your intentions.

REG. Bravo! my young soldier! Is this impudence or madness?

D'AUB. Follow me, and you shall learn what it is!

REG. Nay—with all my heart.

ROSE. François! Captain D'Aubigny!

D'AUB. Come, sir. It is, perhaps, doing you too much honour—but, in such a cause—

REG. O fear not, sir. The condescension is, perhaps, on my side. (*Opening his vest, and shewing the ribbon of the St. Esprit, so as not to be seen by* ROSE.)

D'AUB. (*Aside.*) A nobleman!

REG. No matter—I will make the distance between us no longer than the blade of my sword! Follow me! (*Exit* REGENT.)

ROSE. François, whither go you? (*Clinging to* D'AUBIGNY.) D'Aubigny, stir not, I beseech you, for my sake.

D'AUB. It is for thy sake, Rose. Stay me not—follow me not—if thou would'st have me live! (*Breaks from her, and rushes out.*)

ROSE. There will be bloodshed! Help! Murder! Oh, my brain wheels round! My limbs fail me! (*Faintly.*) Henry! François!

As she is falling, enter DUBOIS.

DUB. What's the matter? (*Catching her.*) Where is François? Speak! She can't! She's fainted, dead away! Ugh! Rot the women! They can always talk but just when you want them. Mademoiselle Rose! He's been at some of his cursed tricks here! My dear! My beauty!

Come to, and be hanged to you! Oh! to think of fainting at such a moment—and I dare not call for help, or they may chance to discover us.

Enter JUSTINE, MARTON, LISETTE, FANCHON, *and* JULIE.

JUS. Discover you, indeed! Monsieur Prudhomme and Rose, I declare!

LIS. Very pretty, upon my word!

MAR. Arn't you ashamed of yourself, after all you've said to me? I'll tell Monsieur François.

DUB. Nonsense! Help her—she's fainted. Where *is* François?

LIS. Fainted! no wonder!

JUS. We've hunted for you all three, all over the garden.

ALL. Oh, fie for shame, Monsieur Prudhomme!

ROSE. (*Recovering.*) François!

DUB. Ah! she can speak at last! Where is he?

ROSE. Oh, fly and save him—he will be slain!

DUB. Slain! Murder! Treason! Which way did he go?

ROSE. (*Waving her hand, faintly.*) Yonder! Yon—der! (*Faints again.*)

DUB. Into the house with her. I must run this way.—(*Girls bear off* ROSE. *As* DUBOIS *is rushing out, enter the* REGENT.) Ah! He is safe!

REG. Hush! (*Taking him aside, and hastily.*) Where is Rose?

DUB. Never mind her! Who attacked you?—The men on horseback?

REG. Men on horseback? no—a young rival—a hot-headed spark, who asserts a prior claim to her; but a thrust in the sword-arm has settled the matter for the present.

DUB. Come with me then instantly. Where's your cloak?

REG. Oh, I wrapped the poor devil up in it, and forced him into a coach I had ordered for myself; but the oddest thing is, that the moment he entered it, the driver started off at full speed, without waiting for a direction. I never saw a hackney-coach go at such a pace in my life. Indeed, it seemed to attract the attention of every body, for a party of horsemen, coming by at the moment, followed (for curiosity, I suppose,) as fast as they could gallop!

DUB. Jubilate! They missed their man! They think they have you!

REG. Who thinks?

DUB. The Duchess du Maine! Porto Carrero! There was a plot! A conspiracy! Come away!

REG. Are you mad! I must speak with Rose—I cannot leave her in such cruel uncertainty.

DUB. You must—you must—send to her afterwards—The mayor of Paris and a deputation—I'll come myself—in state, if you like—anything, to-morrow—when you are once safe in the palace—but now—not a word—come! come! come! (*Drags him out.*)

END OF ACT I.



ACT II.

Scene :—A small, but elegant, Saloon in the Palais Royal. Doors in opposite wings, and folding doors in flat, which, when opened, discover another and larger apartment.

Chairs, sofa, and writing table, of the fashion of the time of Louis XV.; on the latter, two candles burning.

The REGENT *is discovered seated at the table, with papers and letters before him. He is in a richer dress, but still without any insignia of his rank, except the blue ribbon of the Saint Esprit, which is, however, concealed at present under his coat.*

REG. (*Reading a note.*) "Dearest François,—I will come as you desire—alone, and earlier than my friends. In return for this compliance, you must promise to find out Capt. D'Aubigny, and assure me of his safety." I will do so, my pretty Rose, for he is a brave young fellow, and fought like a true gentleman; and, if he will only keep clear of my preserves, I'll see if something cannot be done for him; that is, if he should ever come back, for Dubois declares that he is kidnapped by the Spaniards, and carried to Madrid, in a mistake for me. Ha, ha, ha! 'Twould be a good joke, i'faith, and I shall owe the Don a kind turn for delivering me of a rival.

Enter VERDIER, *from the folding doors.*

Who's there? Oh, Verdier.

VER. I come for your highness's orders.

REG. Right, most punctual Monsieur Verdier. Supper for eight, in the council chamber. Eight—let me see! Yes—Conflans, Brancas, Dubois, and myself—Justine, Lisette, Marton, and Rose—a very pleasant party. Yes, eight, Verdier; and, hark ye, I expect four ladies out of that number, and you must be in the way to receive them.

VER. (*Bows.*) Are the carriages to set down in the great court yard, your highness?

REG. No, sir; if the ladies do not walk, three of them will possibly come in a hackney coach, about ten o'clock, to the little private door in the rue de Valois; but *one* will be there shortly. The moment she comes, shew her up the back stairs, to that door, (*pointing to* R. H. *door,*) and usher the others, when they arrive, into the picture gallery. D'ye understand me, Verdier?

VER. Perfectly, your highness.

REG. And mind that when I ring, you *don't* come. D'ye understand that?

VER. Undoubtedly, your highness.

REG. And now vanish! (*Exit* VERDIER.) For it must not be said that the supper passed without a song in honour of my fair guest, and I have only written four lines.

(*Reading.*)

Long live the pretty girls,
Wheresoe'er they be,
And of all the pretty girls,
The one that loves me.

So far, so *bad.* Never mind. They must do, for want of better. "The one that loves me—the one that loves me." There I stop! Egad, I was never so constant to one that loved me before!

Enter DUBOIS, *from* L. H. D., *in his own dress.*

Ah, Dubois, come and help me!

DUB. To do what, your highness?

REG. To write a song in praise of a pretty grisette; stay, stay—don't speak—

> Is she not a peeress,
> In right of youth and charms?
> What are sixteen quarterings,
> Compared to her dear *arms*?"

Better!—much better! The very sight of my worthy tutor has inspired me. *(Writing.)*

DUB. Reward me, then, by giving up the people I mentioned to you.

REG. Who—who, man? What people?

DUB. The Duke and Duchess du Maine.

REG. No!

DUB. They are your greatest enemies.

REG. They are my cousins. If they only hate *me*—let them alone.

DUB. Come, sir—the Duchess—the Duchess only—and I'll be content.

REG. Dubois, I do believe you're in love with her—you talk of nobody else. I'll tell Marton, you faithless swain—you know she's coming to supper. Where's your wig—respectable Mons. Prudhomme—you musn't be seen in that dress.

DUB. Will you give up the Duchess?

REG. No, I tell you!—I will do no such thing.

DUB. I can prove that the attempt to carry you off, last night, was planned by her.

REG. And I can prove that I was not carried off, and

therefore it does not signify. Confound you and your plots! How am I to finish this song in time for supper?—

Her wealth is in her beauty, free
From envious paint or patch;
Item—two soft rosy cheeks,
And two sweet lips to match.

Bravo! bravo! my little Abbé! I shall finish it now!

DUB. How can your highness talk of songs and suppers, when we stand upon a volcano?

REG. I wish you were in the middle of the crater!

Item—eyes, a pair of such
Would light the world alone!
Item—hands——

Hands!—hands!—

DUB. Your highness—

REG. How can you tease me so, when you see how much I've got upon my *hands?*

DUB. Well, well—sign that paper, at least, and I have done. (*Giving one.*)

REG. What is it?

DUB. Only an order to arrest a Spanish banker, who has failed, and would fly from his creditors.

REG. Ah! you're one of them, I suppose—or you would not give yourself the trouble.

DUB. Pardon me!—he has fled from London, and the English Ambassador desires his arrest in France. We must be quick, for he leaves Paris to night, with the Spanish Secretary, Porto Carrero.

REG. Well, I will sign that; the mantle of diplomacy was not made to cover that sort of roguery—let him be arrested. (*Signs.*)



DUB. And his papers examined—that's all I ask. (*Taking the order.*) For, in searching for his papers, they shall open the Ambassador's despatches—(*movement of the* REGENT)—by the greatest mistake, of course—and if I don't prove to you then that there is a conspiracy to deprive you of the regency, at all risks—

REG. Dubois! Dubois! Do you know that I pity you sincerely. Your distrust of every person renders you most cordially detested.

DUB. With all my heart—it doesn't affect my health or my appetite—and, as to what is said of me—there is your highness, the most kind-hearted and generous of men—do you escape calumny of the most atrocious description? You are loved by the people, it is true, and your ambition is to be another Henri Quatre—but Henri Quatre was assassinated!

REG. Dubois!

DUB. My ambition is to resemble Richelieu. Like him, I am feared and hated;—but, like him, I am rich, fortunate, and powerful;—and, like him, I shall die quietly in my bed. So much for the love of the people!

REG. Dubois! thou art a great rascal!

DUB. That's my affair—I shall be a cardinal.

REG. Never! never! Ha! ha! ask thy friend Marton—

"The Abbé Dubois would a cardinal be."

Ha! ha! ha!

DUB. Hark, there's somebody on the stairs.

REG. 'Tis Rose! Away man! Away, for your life! and don't let me see your ugly face again till supper time.

DUB. Unless in a case of emergency, and then, three taps at this door—

REG. Well—well—if I can't be done without—but away now. (*Exit* DUBOIS, L. H.)

(A knock at door, R. H., *the* REGENT *blows out one of the candles, and goes to the door with the other.)*

REG. Is that you Rose?

ROSE. *(Without.)* Yes, François.

REG. Come in. *(As he opens the door, he blows out the other candle, and the stage becomes quite dark.)* Pshaw! there's the candle out—never mind—come in—give me your hand—we'll soon get a light. *(Leading her in.)*

ROSE. I'll call the man who let me in—he's only just—

REG. No, no, don't give yourself that trouble, I'll ring for him. Sit down there while I find the bell. *(Seats her on the sofa.)*

ROSE. Is he your servant then? Can you afford that?

REG. Oh, he waits upon more than me in the house, *(rings the bell,)* and, therefore, I have often to wait for him.

ROSE. *(Feeling the couch.)* What a nice couch you have here, François, and it's all carved, too, is it not? And you're not higher than the second story here, are you? Dear me, you must pay a great deal for these lodgings. I'm afraid you are very extravagant, François!

REG. *(Seating himself beside her.)* Why, I have been accused of extravagance, certainly—but my situation obliges me to keep a respectable appearance.

ROSE. Respectable—as far as I can judge in the dark, you seem to live like a prince.

REG. Oh, you flatter me—but so much the better for you, dearest Rose—you shall live like a princess! *(Attempting to embrace her.)*

ROSE. *(Starting up.)* François! I shall not sit by you again, sir, till the light comes.

REG. Nay, nay, be not so prudish, Rose. Are we not almost man and wife!



ROSE. Almost, but not *quite*, François. I am not prudish —you know I am not—but there is something in your tone to-night so different from—in short—I—I wish you'd ring again—or go for a light—or let me—(*moving towards the door.*)

REG. Nay, nay, don't you stir, you may run against something in the dark. I will ring again, but the fellow has been sent out on some errand, perhaps, by one of the other lodgers. (*Rings again.*) Come, Rose, sit down.

ROSE. I had rather remain here—and, tell me, for I am anxious to know, what became of poor Captain D'Aubigny. You did not fight, I trust?

REG. Oh, no; only a few hot words passed, and he then began to listen to reason—when some urgent business called him away, and he went off in a coach.

ROSE. And do you not know where he is to be found? I wish much to see him.

REG. You do—I shall be jealous of him, Rose, if you express such anxiety.

ROSE. You have no cause—I told you my story long ago. I did love him once, dearly, I confess, but reason convinced me there was too much disparity in our stations to render that love lasting. A young man of family and fortune, like Monsieur D'Aubigny, a captain in the army, might repent, when it was too late, his union with a poor farmer's daughter.

REG. Never—if he loved you as I love you, Rose.

ROSE. Ah! that's more than you know. You are no better born than myself, though you have been fortunate enough to get into a genteel situation, and, therefore, you cannot understand the feelings of—

REG. But were I the first nobleman in the land?

ROSE. But you are not—and I should be very sorry if you were, for then I should feel I had no longer a right to love you, or expect that you could continue to love me. No, dear François, I love you for yourself, and no rank, no wealth, could give you greater value in my sight.

REG. My own sweet Rose! (*Aside.*) Never, never, till now, have I been truly loved! And must I lose her? Lose her by the declaration of that very rank which alone would win a thousand others! But in that thousand would there be one to equal Rose? To love me as she loves me! Oh, no! no! no! And this girl—this dear, innocent, confiding girl—Philip of Orleans, thou wouldst render her miserable for ever!

ROSE. Francois! Where are you? What are you doing? Pray get a light; you see nobody answers the bell.

REG. Directly! (*Aside.*) It is too late to pause! I cannot—will not—lose her. (*Aloud.*) Rose! (*Three taps are heard at the* L. H. *door.*) Hah!

ROSE. Hark! somebody knocks at a door; is that here? 'Tis the servant, perhaps. Come in.

REG. (*Hastily.*) No, no. (*Aside.*) 'Tis Dubois—I am summoned. (*Aloud.*) One moment, Rose—I will speak to him, and return with a light—stir not from the spot, I entreat you. (*Knocking again.*) Again! 'Tis urgent then, or he would not dare. (*Aloud.*) I come—I come.—(*Exit* REGENT *by* L. H. D.)

ROSE. How very odd! I don't know what to think of all this. I am sorry now that I came alone. I wish Justine and the others would arrive. They can't be long, now, surely, for we were to sup at ten. François' manner is certainly changed—at least, he spoke to-night in the same light tone that he

does to Justine or Lisette—and he always used to make such a difference between us—romping and laughing with them, but evincing for me such respectful affection. I am afraid that their conduct has led him to think less highly of mine. I wish I had not mixed so much with them; yet, working in the same shop, and without other friends—Dear! dear! how disagreeable this is, to be left in the dark so long. If I can find the bell, I'll ring again—or if there was only such a thing as a tinder-box—(*Feeling about.*)

JUS. (*Without.*) This way! This way! Look here!

ROSE. Ah! that was Justine's voice—and there's a light in the next room. (*Sees light under folding-doors, makes towards them, opens, and discovers a rich apartment, which* JUSTINE, MARTON, *and* LISETTE, *are examining with candles.*) Mercy on me! (*Stands astonished.*)

JUS. Ah! here's Rose! Where did you come from? Did you ever see such a fine place?

Entering with MARTON *and* LISETTE.

MAR. Ah, and look here, too! Look here! Here are glasses and sofas!

LIS. But, bless me! (*to* ROSE) were you all in the dark?

ROSE. François is gone for a light—but—I am all astonishment! these rooms! this furniture! Do you know where we are?

JUS. Law, no more than you do! We knocked at the door of a little shabby house in the rue de Valois, as we were told, you know, and a man let us in, and bade us go up a narrow dark staircase, and open the left-hand door on the second landing. And so we did; and I'm sure it quite

knocked me backwards—to see the lights, and the gilding, and the fine pictures.

MAR. I thought it was a mistake, and we were all running down again, when the man stopped us, and said it was quite right, and his master would wait on us shortly.

LIS. Does he mean François?

ROSE. I'm sure I don't know. He says there are other lodgers.

MAR. Well, we haven't seen any, that's all I know; and it hasn't been for want of looking—has it, Justine?

JUS. No, that it hasn't, for we got tired of waiting; so I took up these two fine candlesticks with wax lights in them, and Marton opened another door, and we made a regular procession through half-a-dozen rooms till we came to this; and they are all beautiful, my dear—downright lovely!

LIS. I don't know what to make of it, not I; it's like an enchanted palace.

JUS. An enchanted fiddle-de-dee! It's like a *real* palace, and that's a great deal better.

MAR. I tell you what, I'll lay a wager it's Mr. Prudhomme's house, and not François' at all. You know he's the King's upholsterer—"as rich as a Jew" his own friend said; and, of course, he'd take care to furnish his own rooms famously. That's it, depend upon it. And only think, when I'm Madame Prudhomme!

JUST.
ROSE, & } You!
LIS.

JUST. Oh, then, he is not your uncle after all!

MAR. (*Affectedly.*) No, my dear, I must confess that was a little bit of a fib. But you took me so by surprise—and

Monsieur Prudhomme is so very particular. There are family reasons, my dear, why our union must take place quite in secret; but I know I can trust you; and, therefore, I don't mind acknowledging that Monsieur Prudhomme—

Enter DUBOIS, *as in first Act, and with a light, from* L. H. D.

JUS. Why, there he is!

DUB. (*Starting at seeing all the grisettes.*) Hey day! All together! (*Aside.*) And the Regent, who told me—

MAR. Oh, my dear Monsieur Prudhomme! For goodness sake tell us—this is your fine house, I suppose?

LIS. Oh, you sly man!

JUS. To play us such a trick!

DUB. Why, I confess we intended you an agreeable surprise. But you are not quite in the secret yet.

JUS. Well, tell us, then! Quick!—quick! What is it?

DUB. This is not my house, to begin with. I wish it were.

ROSE. It cannot be François'?

DUB. Not exactly François', though he lives in it. The fact is, that you are in the Palais Royal.

ALL. In the Palais Royal!

ROSE. And François lives here?

DUB. He has got a new place. He is no longer a clerk. I have used my interest at Court, and he is now attached to the Regent.

LIS. Is it possible!

JUS. There's a piece of luck for you, Rose!

DUB. Yes, he's in great favour with his Royal Highness, and is allowed apartments in the palace. Not these—these are the Duke's; but, as he is absent this evening, François

thought it would be a good opportunity to shew you the house, and surprise you in this way with the intelligence.

JUS. Only to think!—we're in the palace!

MAR. In the royal apartments!

LIS. Didn't I say it was like an enchanted palace?

JUS. And didn't I say it was like a real one?

LIS. What's the matter with you, Rose? You don't seem pleased.

ROSE. I had rather François had remained a clerk.

JUS. How very odd! But then you're such an odd girl! Now, ladies, remember you are in a palace, and so you must behave with dignity. We'll play at princesses all the evening.

MAR. Oh, yes; and François shall be the Regent.

LIS. And Rose shall be Madame de Parabere.

ROSE. (*Aside.*) His mistress!—never!

LIS. And who shall Monsieur Prudhomme be?

MAR. Oh, the great friend—the principal person about the Regent, of course.

JUS. Why, then,—ha! ha!—he'll be the Abbé Dubois! What fun!—ha! ha!

LIS. & MAR. Ha! ha!—so he will.

(JUSTINE, MARTON, *and* LISETTE, *take hands, and dance round* DUBOIS, *singing,*)

"Hey! hey! Monsieur l'Abbé,
You'll go to the devil instead of Cambray."

DUB. Hold! hold, ladies! You will please to remember this is not the way they treat a Prime Minister at Court—at least, while he's in office. (*Aside.*) There is no flying from

oneself, says the philosopher! The Abbé Dubois, it seems, I must be. (*To* JUSTINE, *who has gone to the writing-table, and torn some paper.*) Halloo! halloo! what are you doing there?

JUS. Only making curl-papers. This lock has come out of curl, and I just want to twist it up.

(*Goes to a glass, and curls her hair.*)

DUB. Twist it up! Twist it up! (*Aside.*) What on earth has she twisted up?—some state paper, perhaps. (*Taking up the remnant.*) The grant of a pension to the Duke de Villeroy. Come, she's not done so much mischief either. The people ought to vote for her remaining in the cabinet. (*To* LISETTE, *who is about opening the door by which* DUBOIS *entered.*) Stay! stay! You musn't go there! You musn't go there! (*Aside.*) These girls will drive me crazy.

LIS. Law, why not? Isn't it where you came from?

DUB. That's no reason. Besides, (*trying the door,*) you can't go in now. The door's locked,—it was locked on the other side as soon as I came through, and the key taken away.

JUS. And what's all that for, I should like to know?

DUB. Don't you be so curious.

MAR. What, is there another surprise?

DUB. Perhaps so. All in good time. But I must go to Monsieur François, who is very busy, at this moment, giving orders about the supper. We will return together presently; and, till then, amuse yourselves;—but don't curl your hair any more to-night. (*Putting the rest of the papers into a drawer, and locking it.*) Egad! two or three damp evenings, and there'd be an end of the pension list altogether.

(*Exit through folding-doors.*)

JUS. More mysteries! And then he says "Don't be curious,"

as if one could help it, with his "don't do thats," and "musn't go theres." If anybody tells me I musn't, I always want directly, and I will see what's in that room. (*Peeps through the key-hole.*) How provoking!—it's all dark! Oh, law! its something alive, for I heard it move!

ALL. Alive!

JUS. Hush!—listen!

MAR. Pshaw! it's a cat, most likely.

JUS. A cat! But there must be something beside a cat, or he would not make such a fuss about it. Oh! suppose it's the supper, all laid out, and the cat has got at it!

MAR. (*Trying the door.*) There's no getting in—the door *is* locked.

JUS. Oh, here! let's try one of the keys out of the other doors.

ROSE. Indeed you'd better not,—remember, you are in the palace!

JUS. I don't care a fig!—then they shouldn't teaze us. Here! here!

(*Taking the keys out of the other doors, and giving one to* MARTON.)

MAR. (*Trying her key.*) This wont do.

JUS. Come away, then. (*Tries the other.*) This will.

(*Opens the door. Enter* D'AUBIGNY, *with his arm in a sling. All start back.*)

D'AUB. Are ye friends? Hah! what, do I see! those girls again—and Rose?

ROSE. Captain D'Aubigny!

JUS. Well, if it isn't her other!

LIS. Are you asked to supper, too? Come, that is good-natured of François, I will say.

ROSE. How came you here—and wounded?

D'AUB. 'Tis too long a story; tell me but how I may escape—my life is at stake.

ROSE. Your life! Oh, then, by this door—fly!

(*Opening* R. H. D.)

D'AUB. (*Looking out, and retreating hastily.*) Impossible! There are guards on those stairs.

ROSE. Guards! What can all this mean? What have you done?

D'AUB. It matters not!—And why should I struggle with my fate, when I see you here, in this palace? No—no—no! If the doors were wide open, I would not pass the threshold. Welcome death!—it will, at least, prevent me from seeing your dishonour.

ROSE. Dishonour, Captain D'Aubigny!

D'AUB. It is dishonour for a girl like you to be once beneath this roof. Know you not 'tis the palace of the Regent—of the voluptuous libertine, Philip of Orleans?

ROSE. (*Offended.*) I am here beneath the protection of my chosen husband! Pardon me, Henry; but you provoked me. I am here with my friends, at the invitation of François.

D'AUB. (*Bitterly.*) François!—but you are deceived, Rose. François is not the person he professes himself! He is no clerk—but a member of this dissolute court. Perhaps—who knows?—a pander of the duke's; and you—you have been beguiled hither for—

ROSE. Henry, Henry!—but you are in peril, and I will think but of that. François, the man you have slandered, shall save you! He *is* in favour with the Regent—I have only just learned it—but—

D'AUB. And you would have me owe my life a second time to *him?*

ROSE. A second time?

MAR. Here's Monsieur Prudhomme—perhaps he can do something!

Enter DUBOIS.

DUB. (*Aside.*) What do I see!—the prisoner at liberty! O, then, there's no time for ceremony. (*Opening* R. H. D. *Aloud.*) Guards!

ALL *but* D'AUB. Monsieur Prudhomme!

DUB. Ladies, I must request—

Enter two GUARDS DE CORPS.

(*To* D'AUBIGNY.) I presume, sir, you are aware resistance is useless?

D'AUB. At any rate I do not intend it.

DUB. You will, then, return to that apartment till his royal highness is at liberty to interrogate you. (*To the* GUARDS.) Look to the prisoner!

D'AUBIGNY *re-enters the apartment,* L. H, *followed by* GUARDS.

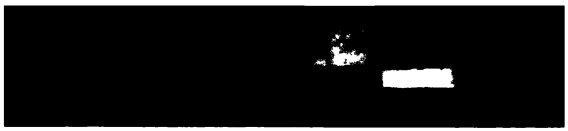
ROSE. Henry! (*Turning to* DUBOIS.) Oh, sir, you seem to have power!

MAR. My dear Monsieur Prudhomme, for my sake—

DUB. I can listen to nothing. Ladies, you must not remain in this apartment.

LIS. (*Passing through folding-doors.*) We don't want to stay with anybody so cruel. (*Exit.*)

MAR. You're as bad as the Abbé Dubois! (*Exit.*)



JUS. You're a wicked old wretch, and I hate you! (*Exit.*)

DUB. (*Coolly, to* ROSE, *who lingers.*) And you, Mademoiselle—

ROSE. Oh, François! François!—where art thou?

Enter the REGENT.

Ah! thou art here! (*Rushing into his arms.*) Save him, and save me!

REG. (*Motioning to* DUBOIS *to retire.*) What is the matter? (*Exit* DUBOIS, *closing the doors.*).

ROSE. D'Aubigny is here, a prisoner. He says his life is in danger!

REG. D'Aubigny!—Nay, nay!—I can acquit him of all guilt. It is true there has been a conspiracy to deprive Philip of Orleans of the regency; and, failing in their attempt last night to carry off the duke, they have been bold enough, within the last hour, to endeavour to seize the person of the young king himself. Happily, we have foiled them there too. But D'Aubigny could not have been a party to this mad plot, as he has only been brought back this evening from Tours, whither he was carried in a mistake by the conspirators themselves.

ROSE. Still he is a prisoner in that chamber!

REG. His attendance is required merely to give evidence against others. Be assured no ill will befal him.

ROSE. Then tell him so, and let me quit this place!—I must not remain here.

REG. Not!—why not? Indeed you must not leave me! What have you to fear, protected by my love?

ROSE. I know not!—they have awakened horrid fears in my heart! But it cannot be—I am your's—am I not?—your chosen, honourable bride? Nobody shall separate us! You—you have not brought me here—for—another?

REG. Forbid it, love! No, no,—thou art mine, and mine alone!

ROSE. Then let us quit this hated palace together!—I know you will plead your duty to the duke—your situation. Prudhomme has told me all; but give up your appointment,—be again the humble clerk you were when you first met me and shielded me from insult!—Expose me not anew to it!

REG. Insult!—Would you so term, then, the ardent, the devoted love of a powerful prince?—Say that the Regent himself—

ROSE. The Regent!—Do not drive me mad!—Do not tell me it is true that *you*, François,—that *you* have betrayed me to such shame as even the thought of such a love would cause me!—I will not believe it of you—should you even swear it!—you would not so basely wrong the confidence of a loving, trusting girl!—No, no, François, you would not—you could not!—Ah! (*Seeing the blue ribbon, which the duke, in his agitation, has displaced*) What does this mean? (*Drags it from his bosom, and recognizes the Order of the St. Esprit.*)

REG. Rose!

ROSE. Stand off!—approach me not!—Who art thou?

REG. Thy servant!—thy slave!

ROSE. Cease this cruel mockery!—thou art not François!

REG. Yes, yes!—ever thine own François!—François and Philip of Orleans are—(ROSE *shrieks and falls.*) Distraction!—help!—within there!—Verdier! (*Raising* ROSE.)



Enter VERDIER *from the folding-doors, and, at the same time,* D'AUBIGNY, *struggling with the* GUARDS, *from the other door.*

D'AUB. Off!—off!—'tis her voice!—you shall kill me ere you stay me!

REG. Captain D'Aubigny! (*To* GUARDS.) Release him!

D'AUB. Rose! Rose! You have murdered her!

REG. Patience, sir; all will be well. (*They place* ROSE *on a couch; at a sign from the* REGENT, *exeunt* GUARDS.)

D'AUB. Well! cowardly seducer!

REG. Tempt me not too far, sir! You speak to the Regent, Duke of Orleans!

D'AUB. I care not!—*my* life is already forfeited, and you have destroyed her!

REG. Peace, madman, for her sake! She revives.

ROSE. (*Faintly.*) Where am I?

REG. Amongst friends.

ROSE. That voice! Do not you speak to me, who ever you are!—that voice kills me! Is no one else near me?

D'AUB. Rose! dearest Rose!

ROSE. Hah! *that* indeed! (*Looking about, wildly.*) But no—no! still the horrid dream pursues me!—these gilded walls—this hated splendour! Who spoke of friends?—I have but one in the world now, and he is—ah! (*Seeing* D'AUBIGNY, *and with a burst of delight*)—he is here!—he is here! (*Clinging to him.*)

REG. (*Reproachfully.*) And I, Rose!—I, who love thee so dearly!

ROSE. Hush!—for thine own honour, if not for mine! Thou art to me, now, nothing but the prince—the Regent! Here! here is my only hope—my only protector! Rob me

not also of him!—Be generous!—be noble! and bid us quit this palace together.

REG. (*Mournfully, and aside.*) 'Tis all over!—I feel it! I have lost her for ever! and yet she is the only woman, perhaps, who ever really loved me. Well, she shall never *hate* me. (*Aloud.*) Be it as you have said. Farewell, Rose. Sir, (*to* D'AUBIGNY) you are at liberty!

Enter DUBOIS, *from folding-doors, with papers.*

ROSE. Oh, thanks!—thanks! Come, Henry, come.

DUB. (*Advancing.*) At liberty! One moment—your highness will pardon me—but that may not be. Captain D'Aubigny is guilty of high treason!—I have the proofs in my hand!—I have arrested the Spanish ambassador!

REG. Arrested an ambassador?

DUB. An ambassador who conspires against the sovereign at whose court he is a resident, assuredly; and amongst the papers of his secretary, examined *by mistake* while searching for the bankers, these letters were found, implicating Captain D'Aubigny, as the agent of the Duchess du Maine, in the plot to seize the person of his majesty, Louis XV. Here is evidence of his having tampered with the officers of the guard. (*Giving a letter.*)

REG. (*Tearing it.*) It exists no longer! Give the Spanish Ambassador his passports, and let him leave Paris within twenty-four hours. Make out another passport for Captain and (*bowing to* ROSE) Madame D'Aubigny. (ROSE *starts and shrinks from* D'AUBIGNY, *timidly; he folds her to his bosom.*) They will inform you whither they wish to travel. Farewell, Rose!—may you think of me sometimes as a *friend;* and you, sir, (*to* D'AUBIGNY) as neither a coward



nor a villain! (*With an effort.*) Come, Dubois, we'll go to supper *now*—and to war with Spain to-morrow morning! Quick, Verdier, the champagne and the ladies! Justine shall sing us the new song—"Hey! hey! Monsieur l'Abbé." Those profligate rascals, Conflans and Brancas, shall laugh at me as long as they like; but I trust the people will confess, that, in spite even of *thy* teaching, Dubois, there is still some good about—

THE REGENT!

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THE

LOAN OF A LOVER.

SCENE I.

Gardens of a villa on the Canal near Utrecht. The tower of the Cathedral is seen in the distance. In one corner of the Garden, overlooking the Canal, is a Summer House, in the Dutch taste.

Enter SWYZEL *and* DELVE.

SWY. Do as you're bid, and no reflections. Don't you know the mistress is the master?

DEL. Well, but now really, Mynheer Swyzel—to put out the orange-trees before the white frosts are over—is that common sense?

SWY. What have you to do with common sense? Nothing at all—or you would not pretend to have more than your mistress. It is Mamzelle Ernestine's pleasure to turn the orangery into a ball-room, and turned it must be.

DEL. But the trees will die.

SWY. Let 'em die, then—that's their business—yours is to clear the place out, according to order. About it, without more words! If she told me to fling all the Schie-

dam in the cellar into the canal, I should do so, without hesitation.

DEL. You'd fling yourself after it, I'm sure.

SWY. Not when it was mixed with water, you rogue! or while the Baron has money enough to buy more. Come—to work! to work! or you'll not get the room ready by midnight.

DEL. O, my poor orange trees—they'll die, every one of them! (*Exit* DELVE.)

SWY. Silly fellow, to trouble his head about what does not concern him. If his employers take no care for their own interests, why should he fidget about them? He hasn't the slightest notion of service! Ah! here's Peter Spyk.

Enter PETER.

Well, Peter.

PET. Good morning, Master Steward.

SWY. So, you've been to Amsterdam, to buy cattle, I hear?

PET. Aye, and fine beasts they are too, Master Steward; but, talking of beasts, how do you find yourself to day? you were rather poorly when I left.

SWY. Oh, I'm better, thank you; but I'm not so young as I was thirty years ago—I find that, Peter. Ah! I envy you, you rogue! Three-and-twenty—stout-timbered—light-hearted—and rich, I may say; for old Jan Spyk, your father, left you a pretty round sum, I take it?

PET. Why, it might have been less, and yet worth having, Master Steward.

SWY. Well, and why don't you get a wife now? All the girls in the neighbourhood are pulling caps for you!

PET. Why, I don't know; they do look at me, somehow, but I'm not smitten with anybody in particular. However, I don't wish to prevent them—they may fall in love with me, then I can choose, you know.

SWY. Well, perhaps that's the best way.

PET. Yes, I think so—as Gertrude said to me, the other day—you don't love any body in particular, Peter, so you can look about you.

SWY. Gertrude—what, our Gertrude? The simpleton that has the run of the house and gardens by permission of the Baron, because she is the orphan daughter of his old bailiff, and who is always so mighty busy, doing nothing at all, by way of earning the living allowed her! Is she your counsellor?

PET. Oh, she and I gossip now and then, when we meet. She's a sort of relation of mine—my brother-in-law's aunt stood godmother to her.

SWY. Well, that is a sort of relation, certainly.

PET. And then, you see, simpleton as she is, she has now and then an idea, and that's the only thing I want—I never have an idea. It's very odd, but I never have what you can really call an idea—of my own, that is—for I'm quick enough, if a person only just—and yesterday, now, I saw her but for two or three minutes, and I'll be hanged if she didn't give me a capital idea! and that's what has brought me here this morning. You've a Captain Amersfort staying here, haven't you?

SWY. Oh, yes; one of our young lady's score of lovers—and the best of 'em, too, to my mind; but she's too capricious to make up hers. He's a fine fellow—handsome, clever, gallant—

PET. And landlord of the fine farm of Appledoorn—so Gertrude says.

SWY. Ah! and you want to be his tenant, no doubt?

PET. Why Gertrude thinks—

SWY. Well, she's right there—it's a pretty property; but there are several farmers offering.

PET. So she tells me; but she says that if you were to speak to the Captain in my favour—

SWY. Well, she's right there, too. If I were to speak—

PET. And will you?—will you, Master Steward? I've a keg at home of the finest flavour, which I should be too happy—

SWY. Pshaw! pshaw! you know if I do any thing it's never with a view to benefit myself, Peter; so send me the keg, if it will serve you, and we'll see what can be done about it.

GER. *(Without.)* Mynheer Swyzel! Mynheer Swyzel!

SWY. Here comes Gertrude.

Enter GERTRUDE, *running.*

GER. Mynheer Swyzel! Mynheer Swyzel!

SWY. Well, don't bawl so—you young baggage! What do you want?

GER. *(Out of breath.)* You're to go directly—I've been looking for you everywhere, to tell you—there's Peter Spyk!

SWY. To tell me that?—why I know that.

GER. No; to tell you—to tell you—how d'ye do, Peter? are you very well?

PET. Aye, aye!

SWY. Will you tell me what you mean to tell me?



GER. Law! I'd almost forgotten—I'd run so fast. How well Peter looks this morning—don't he?

SWY. Do let Peter alone! and tell me who wants me—and what for. Is it for the wine for breakfast?

GER. Yes, that's it—you've got the keys of the cellar, and the Baron wants some of the best Moselle, to give to Captain Amersfort.

SWY. Good morning, then, Peter. I'll take an opportunity of speaking to the Captain, depend upon it. I must go now for the Baron.

(*French Air.*)

GERTRUDE.

Well, but make more haste about it,
Master wants to treat his guest.

SWYZEL.

Oh, I'll please him! never doubt it;
Of his wine I know the best.
He shall own that down his throttle,
Such has seldom found it's way.

GERTRUDE (*aside*).

Then you'll get him up a bottle
Of what you drink every day.

(*Exit* SWYZEL.)

GER. (*Aside.*) An old rogue, I'm sure he is; and he always snubs me and scolds me. So does everybody, indeed, except Peter. Peter never snubs me, at any rate; but that's because he hardly ever speaks to me. Now only look at him at this moment! there he stands, puffing away with his pipe, and turning up the whites of his eyes. Now, what can he be thinking about?—that is, if he is thinking—suppose it's about—(*aloud, and taking hold of his arm*)—Peter!

PET. Eh!—Oh! you're here still, are you?

GER. (*A* *e.*) How civil! (*Aloud.*) Yes, I am here still; and, if I had kept still, you'd never have known it, seemingly. What are you thinking about so deeply?

PET. Th king about? Why, I was thinking about Mother W 's tavern, where I breakfasted this morning.

GER. W

PET. Rat on- ied my life out with—"Why don'. r er Spyk?"—"Why do you live al ... that ike an owl in an ivy-bush?"—"Why don't yo ife? you've got money enough to keep one, and ur own master; you've only to please yourself."

GER. Well, and haven't I you so over and over again?

PET. Well, so you have; and I do think, if I should get the Appeldoorn Farm, I'll sign a lease and a contract the same day.

GER. But, if you don't get the farm, what does it signify?—you might marry all the same for that. You've enough without. You needn't wait—that is, if you like anybody well enough to marry them.

PET. Ah, but then I don't know that I do. Now, who is there, in your opinion, that would suit me?

GER. Oh, I don't know. I dare say, if I were to choose, I could name somebody.

PET. Well, but let's see now. To begin with the neighbourhood:—I know all the girls here, and I am sure I can't say—(*suddenly*)—What d'ye think of Mary Moerdyke, to begin with?

GER. Very bad, to begin with, and much better to have done with as soon as possible. She is the worst tempered

girl in all Utrecht, and as tall as the tower yonder—a great, gawky, sulky thing, just like it.

PET. Ah, well, I don't think she would suit me, certainly. But there's her cousin, Judith—she's very good-natured?

GER. Ah, Judith's a pretty girl, if you please, and very good-natured, as you say, — perhaps a little too good-natured.

PET. No, really, humph!—I shouldn't like that. What d'ye say to Anne Stein?

GER. Everybody says she's a great coquette. See her on a Sunday, that's all! or at a dance at the fair! She's always changing her partner.

PET. Oh, if she's always changing her partner—well, they can't say that of little Barbara?

GER. No, because she is lame, and can't dance at all.

PET. That's very true; poor thing, she's lame—so she is. Well, I declare, then, Vrow Wynk herself?

GER. Old enough to be your grandmother.

PET. And Rachael, her daughter?

GER. She's engaged to young Maurice.

PET. The Devil! Then I must go farther a field, for there's nobody else that I know of in this place.

GER. (*Aside*) Oh dear! oh dear! how blind he is, to be sure.

PET. Ah!—stop! What a fool I am, never to have remembered—

GER. Well, who?—what?

PET. Why, that to-morrow will be market-day here, and that there'll be plenty of pretty girls, from all the villages round about—so I can choose, without the trouble of a journey.

(*Dutch Air.*)

PETER.

To-morrow will be market-day,
The streets all thronged with lasses gay,
And from a crowd so great, no doubt,
Sweethearts enough I may pick out.
In verity, verity, &c.

GERTRUDE.

Be not too bold, for hearts fresh caught
Are ne'er, I'm told, to market brought;
The best, they say, are given away,
Nor left to sell on market-day.
In verity, verity, &c.

PET. Well, at any rate, I'll take my chance of to-morrow. But yonder's Mamzelle and some of the gentle folks, so I'll go and hear what the steward has done for me. Good bye, Gertrude. I say, mind, if you can find me a nice little good-tempered wife, I'll make you a present the day I'm married, and you shall dance at the wedding. (*Exit* PET.)

GER. Now isn't it provoking? He can think of everybody but me; and unless I were to say to him, plump, "Peter, will you marry me?"—and then, if he should say, "No!" oh, I should die with shame and disappointment. O dear! O dear! how vexatious it is! And it's not only Peter, but nobody seems to think me worth marrying at all—nobody ever says a civil thing to me of any sort! I never had a sweetheart in my life, and I do believe that's the reason. If I only had one to begin with, I shouldn't wonder if they swarmed afterwards.

("*A Temple to Friendship.*")

I don't think I'm ugly!—I'm only just twenty—
I know I should make a most excellent wife;
The girls all around me have lovers in plenty,
But I not a sweetheart can get for my life!



It isn't because I am not worth a penny,
For lasses as poor I've known dozens to win;
That I should have none, and the others so many,
I vow and declare it's a shame and a sin!

(*Retires up the stage, sobbing.*)

Enter ERNESTINE *and* CAPTAIN AMERSFORT.

AMER. Why, you proposed the ride yourself, Ernestine.

ERN. Perhaps I did; but I've changed my mind.

AMER. Will you walk, then?

ERN. It's too hot.

AMER. By the side of the canal—under the trees?

ERN. By the side of the canal? I wonder you don't propose that I should tow the passage-boat.

AMER. I shouldn't wonder if you proposed something equally extravagant. For myself, I have done—I shall suggest nothing else. Please yourself, if possible, and you will please me.

ERN. Now he's out of humour.

AMER. No, not out of humour—but you are the most capricious creature!

ERN. Well, well, sir, if you are tired of your allegiance, renounce it at once. I have plenty of slaves at my foot-stool who will serve me with oriental obedience!

AMER. If they really loved you they would not encourage you in your follies.

ERN. My follies! How dare you talk to me of my follies, sir? Hold your tongue! Hold your tongue, directly! There's Gertrude, and I want to speak to her. Gertrude! (*Calling.*)

GER. Yes, mamzelle. (*Drying her eyes.*)

ERN. What's the matter, Gertrude? you've been crying.

GER. Yes, mamzelle.

ERN. And what for? Has any one vexed you? some faithless swain, perhaps?

GER. Oh dear no, mamzelle. I wish it was—but that's not possible! (*Bursts out afresh.*)

ERN. How d'ye mean—not possible, child?

GER. Because I havn't got a swain of any sort.

ERN. Bless the girl! What, no sweetheart, at your age?

GER. No, mamzelle.

ERN. Then, perhaps that's what you are crying about?

GER. Yes, mamzelle.

ERN. Silly wench! you ought to rejoice at it rather; the men are nothing but plagues, Gertrude. Lovers, indeed! there's not one worth having.

GER. I—I wish I had one though, just to try. I was just saying to myself it was a shame that some young women should have a score, and others none at all.

AMER. The girl is right enough, there. It is a shame that some young women should have a score, and hold out equal hopes to all.

ERN. The sooner you lessen the number ofmine the better, then. I could manage to spare even the gallant Captain Amersfort—and—a capital thought! as you seem so concerned at the unequal division, I'll transfer you to Gertrude.

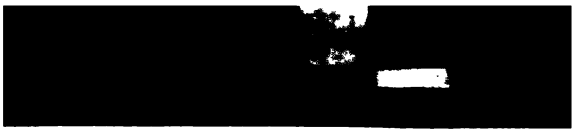
GER. Law, mamzelle, you don't say so? Will you, really?

AMER. Ernestine! What folly!

ERN. I'm quite serious. As you have no admirer, Gertrude, and I have so many, I'll give you one of mine.

GER. Oh, but I don't want you to *give* me one, mamzelle. If you'll only lend me a beau—just to encourage the others.

ERN. Ha! ha! ha! delightful! That's better still!—you



hear, sir, I am not to give you up altogether, though you deserve it; I shall only try your obedience! We command you, therefore, on pain of our sovereign displeasure, to pay all proper attentions to our handmaid, Gertrude; you are her beau till further notice.

AMER. Ernestine, are you mad?

ERN. Mad or not, you will obey me, or take the consequences. I won't be charged with folly and extravagance for nothing. (*Aside.*) Remember, I have promised my father to decide this day in favour of somebody. If you hesitate only, you are excluded from all chance. (*Aloud.*) Gertrude, I lend you a beau, on your personal security, mind.

GER. Oh, you needn't be afraid, mamzelle—I'll take the greatest care of him—and, besides—

(*Dutch Air.*)

GERTRUDE.

Think not I the heart would keep
I'm content to borrow;
See, if I don't have a heap,
To pay it from, to-morrow.
Money, money, makes they say—
The job is to get any!
And lovers grow like money may.

ERNESTINE.

Oh, yes, one fool makes many.

ERN. (*To* AMERSFORT.) One step, and you lose me for ever. (*Exit* ERNESTINE.)

AMER. (*To himself.*) This passes everything. I am a fool, indeed, and love her like a fool, or I would never bear—

GER. Only think! I've got a beau at last—and such a beau—an officer! a fine, young, handsome officer! What'll Peter say to that?

AMER. And while I thus humour her caprices, she returns

to the house to flirt with that puppy, Amstell, or that booby, Blankenberg.

GER. But he takes no more notice of me than Peter, himself.

AMER. I will *not* endure it. I will follow her, and—

GER. Stop! stop! you mustn't run away—you're only *lent* to me, you know—and if I should *lose* you, there'll be a pretty business!

AMER. (*Laughing, in despite of himself.*) Upon my word, this is too ridiculous. So, you really look upon me as a loan, do you?

GER. Yes, and I don't choose to be left alone. My stars! Peter could do that.

AMER. Peter! who's Peter? I thought you said you hadn't a sweetheart in the world?

GER. Nor have I.

AMER. Come, come, no fibs! You've betrayed yourself. This said Peter, isn't he a sweetheart?

GER. No, I don't think he is—at least, I don't know. What do you call a sweetheart—one whom you love, or one who loves you?

AMER. One who loves you, of course.

GER. Well, then, I'm right, he is not my sweetheart; but I am his, for I love him dearly.

AMER. What a candid little soul! And so you really love Peter, dearly, though Peter doesn't love you? But are you sure he doesn't love you?

GER. I don't believe he ever thought about it.

AMER. Is it possible! Why, you are very pretty. (*Aside.*) Upon my soul she is uncommonly pretty. I wonder I never noticed her before. (*Aloud.*) And so Peter has never thought about you?

GER. No—



(" *Faut l'oublier.*")*

I've no money; so, you see,
Peter never thinks of me—
I own it to my sorrow!
Oh, could I grow rich, and he
Be reduced to poverty,
What sweet revenge 'twould be for me,
To marry him to-morrow!

Peter's thought almost a fool,
You have profited by school—
Wit from you folks borrow!
Peter's plain—you handsome, gay;
But, if you were both to say—
" Will you have me, Gertrude, pray?"
I'd marry *him* to-morrow!

AMER. There's love!—there's devotion! What charming frankness!—what innocent enthusiasm! By Jove! if she wasn't so fond of another, I should be almost tempted—if it were only to punish Ernestine! I—I— (*aloud.*) Confound that Peter! *Almost* a fool—he must be a downright idiot not to fall head over ears in love with such a sweet, dear, bewitching—(*Catches her round the waist; he is about to kiss her as* PETER SPYK *enters with* SWYZEL.)

SWY. I beg your pardon, captain. (*Both stop short—* PETER *staring at* GERTRUDE.)

GER. (*Aside.*) Oh, lud, there *is* Peter!

AMER. What the devil do you want?

SWY. Only to introduce Peter Spyk—an honest young farmer—who desires to be your honour's tenant.

* This Song is published by Mr. Chappell, 50, New Bond-street.

AMER. Peter Spyk! What is this *the* Peter?

GER. Yes, that's Peter Spyk; and he wants to rent your farm of Appeldoorn; and I am sure you can't do better than let him have it, for he's as good a farmer, and as honest a young man—

AMER. If you interest yourself for him, my dear Gertrude, that is sufficient. Swyzel, come here—(*aside to him*)—I am much interested about this girl!—I've taken a great fancy to her!

SWY. What, to our Gertrude?—to that poor simple thing? Well, I thought just now you seemed rather—eh? You're a terrible man, captain! What will mamzelle say?

AMER. Oh, it's all in pure friendship, I assure you; but come this way, and tell me all you know about her. (*Aloud, to* PETER.) I'll speak to you, presently, young man.

(AMERSFORT *and* SWYZEL *enter the summer-house.*)

GER. Peter, you'll have the farm!

PET. No, shall I though! Well, I thought he said something like it; and because you asked him, too! I say, you and he seem great friends—he'd got his arm round your waist!

GER. Had he?—oh, yes, I believe he had.

PET. Well, now, I've known you ever since you were that high, and I'm sure I never put my arm round your waist!

GER. No, that you never did! But, then, he's my sweetheart!

PET. *Your* sweetheart?—yours? What, the captain? Pshaw! you're joking!

GER. Joking!—indeed I'm not joking! What is there so strange in it, pray?

PET. Why, in the first place, he's mamzelle's sweetheart!

GER. Not now.

PET. What, has he left her for you? Why, what can a rich officer like that see in a poor servant girl?

GER. Don't be a brute, Peter! If you can't see anything to like in me, it's no reason that others should not.

PET. Me!—oh, that's a different affair; because you and I, you know, there's not so much difference between us, and —oh, by the bye, talking of that—I've been thinking of what you said to me, and I wont wait any longer—not even till to-morrow—I've fixed upon Anne Stein. Her mother was here just now, on some business with old Swyzel, and something was dropped about my having the Appeldoorn farm; and Swyzel says, she gave him a hint that her daughter, Anne, was very fond of me, and that decided me at once.

GER. It did?

PET. Oh, yes; because, where a woman is really fond of one, you know—So, directly I've settled with the captain about the farm, I'll post off to widow Stein's, and—well, what's the matter with you, Gertrude? Why, you are crying!

GER. Nothing—nothing! I wish you may be happy—that's all, Peter.

PET. Thank ye—thank ye! It's very kind of you to cry for joy about me, I'm sure—and I wont forget my promise.

Re-enter AMERSFORT *and* SWYZEL, *from the summer-house.*

SWY. You can't be in earnest, captain?

AMER. I tell you there it is, in black and white! Put a

wafer in that, (*giving a note,*) and send it immediately to my lawyer's, as directed.

SWY. (*Aside.*) Two thousand crowns to portion off a wench like that. 'Gad! she wont want a husband long.

(*Exit* SWYZEL.)

AMER. (*To* PETER.) Now for you, farmer. I find there are writing materials in the summer-house, so we can—

GER. Stop! stop!—one word.

AMER. What is it?

GER. (*Leading him apart from* PETER.) You are my beau, you know, and you're to do everything I bid you!

AMER. Of course.

GER. Well, then, I bid you refuse the farm to Peter Spyk!

AMER. Refuse!—why I thought you said—

GER. It doesn't signify what I said!—I've changed my mind! I suppose I may do that as well as your fine ladies! You're to obey me!—mamzelle Ernestine said so; and I don't choose you shall let Peter have the farm! (*Speaking the last five words loud enough for* PETER *to hear.*)

PET. (*Aside.*) "*Let Peter have the farm!*" 'Gad! she's giving me a famous lift with the captain!

AMER. Well, if you don't choose, he shan't have it, certainly; and I'm not sorry, for I don't think he deserves it. And, now, listen to me. I mean to help you to a good husband, and, in return, you must assist me in a little plot. I can't stay to tell you now; but meet me in half an hour's time at the sun-dial yonder. May I depend upon you?

GER. That you may.

AMER. Enough! Now, master Peter Spyk, follow me.



There's no occasion for writing: we can settle this business in two words.

PET. (*Aside.*) The farm's mine! (*To* GERTRUDE.) I owe you a good turn for this! (*Exit, with* AMERSFORT.)

GER. Indeed you do. If Anne Stein marries him now I'm mistaken in the family altogether.

Re-enter SWYZEL.

SWY. I've sent Delve with the note; but I've made up my mind. I'm not a young man, certainly; and I had no idea of changing my situation; but two thousand crowns will suit me as well as anybody in the world, and so here goes—there's nothing like being first in the field. (*Aloud.*) Gertrude! Gertrude!—come hither, Gertrude; I want to say a word to you in private!

GER. To me, master steward? (*Aside.*) O dear, now he's going to scold me for something, I'm sure. A cross old patch!

SWY. Come here, I tell you! Nearer—don't be afraid—I'm going to propose something for your good, my dear!

GER. (*Aside*) "My dear!" Bless me, how kind he's grown all of a sudden.

SWY. I've known you a long while, Gertrude—from your cradle in fact. I knew your poor dear father and mother, and I always had a great affection for you!

GER. You, Mynheer Swyzel?—I'm sure you never shewed it, then.

SWY. May be not—may be not! I was afraid of spoiling you, as a child; but now, you know, you are grown up, and very nicely you have grown up—I see it more and more every day—and, in short, Gertrude, I've been thinking that,

as I am a bachelor, I couldn't do better than marry a good pretty girl like you, whose character and temper I have watched the growth of from an infant.

GER. You—you, Mynheer Swyzel, marry me?

SWY. Why not—why not?—if you have no objection. I'm only fifty-five, and a hale, hearty man for that age. I have saved some money in service, and—

GER. But I haven't a doight in the world!

SWY. Nay; nay!—you are richer than you think for!

GER. Eh?

SWY. In charms—in youth and beauty!—

GER. (*Aside.*) So—so! here's a real, downright sweetheart at last!—and old Swyzel, too, of all men in the world! I shall die of laughing!

SWY. (*Aside.*) She's silent!—she hesitates! The two thousand crowns are mine!

(*Dutch Air.*)

SWYZEL.

My ears with sweet consentment bless!

GERTRUDE (*aside.*)

The moon must, surely, be about full!

(*Aloud.*)

I don't say *no*—I don't say *yes*.

SWYZEL.

Alack! that's rather doubtful!

GERTRUDE.

What proof have I you mean me fair?
Your sex is of deceit, throughout, full.

SWYZEL.

Upon my honour, I declare!

GERTRUDE.

Alack! that's rather doubtful!



GER. (*Aside.*) Here's Peter coming back. If I could manage—(*aloud.*) Besides, that isn't the way to swear you love a body—you should go down on your knees!

SWY. There!—there, then! Charming Gertrude, on my knees, I swear eternal love and constancy!

Enter PETER.

PET. Halloo!—why, Mynheer Swyzel, what are you doing there?

SWY. (*Scrambling up.*) Confusion! (*Aloud.*) I—nothing—only kneeling to— (*Aside to* GERTRUDE.) Don't say anything to that fool. Come to my room as soon as you've got rid of him. (*Exit* SWYZEL.)

GER. You here again, Peter?

PET. Here again!—I believe I am, too; and just as I went away. Would you believe it?—Captain Amersfort wont let me the farm after all!

GER. Dear me!—you don't say so?

PET. He wouldn't hear a word; and, to make matters worse, old widow Stein, who saw me talking to him, waited to hear the upshot; and, when I told her, she as good as gave me to understand that I wasn't match enough for her daughter, and that Anne herself liked Groot, the miller, much better than she did me! A coquette!—you said she was a coquette!—and you were quite right. I don't know how it is, but you're always right!—you've got more sense than all of 'em put together; and, for the matter of looks, why there's the captain vows—and, talking of vowing, what was old Swyzel about on his knees? I do believe he was vowing, too!

GER. Between you and me, he was vowing all sorts of love to me!—and he wants me to marry him!

PET. Marry him!—marry old Swyzel!—and will you?

GER. I don't know!—what do you think? Would you like me to marry him, Peter?

PET. Not at all! I don't know how it is, but I can't fancy your marrying anybody—that is, I never thought of *your* marrying anybody; and, now I do think of it, I think—

GER. Well—what?

Enter DELVE, *with a note.*

DEL. Oh, Gertrude, here you are; here's a note for you. It's very particular—they gave me a florin to run all the way!

GER. A note for me?—who is it from?

DEL. The clerk at Van Nickem's, the lawyer's. I took a letter there for the captain, and, as his master wasn't at home, the clerk opened it, and wrote this answer to the captain, and then scribbled that for you, and begged me to give you yours first—and so I have; and now I must find the captain.

(Exit DELVE.)

GER. A note for me? Nobody ever wrote to me before; and, if they had, it would have been no use, for I can't read written hand. You can, Peter; so pray open it, and let's hear what it's all about.

PET. *(Opening and reading.)* "Mamzelle." Mamzelle, to you!

GER. Go on—go on.

PET. "I have loved you above all earthly beings!"

GER. Bless us, and save us!

PET. "I dared not disclose my passion; but, believe me, my affection was equal to my silence."

GER. Then it was great indeed!

PET. "I have at length summoned courage to address you, and if the offer of my hand and fortune"—another proposal!—who is the fellow that writes this?

GER. Van Nickem's clerk, Delve told you.

PET. Yes; here's his ugly name, sure enough, at the bottom of it—Simon Sneek!

GER. Ah! if I recollect, he's rather a good-looking young man!

PET. Why you don't mean to—

GER. Surely he's better than old Swyzel!

PET. Well! but what does it all mean? Everybody wants to marry you!

GER. I can't help that—can I? But I shan't be in a hurry; I shall do as you do—look about me; perhaps somebody may offer that I should like better. (*Clock strikes.*) Hark! that's two o'clock!—and I promised to meet the captain at the sun-dial yonder. Good bye, Peter, and mind, if you can find me a husband that I should like better than any of these, I'll make you a present the day I'm married, and you shall dance at the wedding! (*Runs out.*)

PET. (*Stands staring after her, with the note open in his hand.*) Well, when she talks of Anne Stein always changing her partner—she's off to meet the captain now; and yet she says to me, "if you can find me a husband I should like better!" the idea of Gertrude having a husband!—a little girl, that was only a baby the other day, as it seems to me. I wonder if she'd like *me* better; because if she would—I want a wife myself—and I don't know why I didn't at first—

But there goes that cursed captain, running like mad to meet her!—'Gad! I begin to feel that I don't like it at all. Why can't he keep to his fine ladies, and let the others alone? I don't go and make love to Mamzelle Ernestine, do I? What bus[illegible]ack of stuff to Gertrude, and turn t[illegible]He'd better mind what he's about th[illegible]at! If he makes her unhappy, I [illegible]for something, for I should break every bo[illegible]!

[illegible]LVE.

DEL. What'[illegible]ter Peter? you don't look best pleased.

PET. Well, I have been pleased better.

DEL. Anything in that note?

PET. This note!—no. This is the note you brought from Van Nickem's. There's that young rogue, Sneek, wants to marry Gertrude.

DEL. To marry Gertrude! well, now, do you know, I think he might do worse.

PET. Might do worse?—I believe he might, too!

DEL. Gertrude's by no means ill-looking.

PET. Ill-looking?—she's very pretty.

DEL. Well—yes—I think she is,—and very good tempered.

PET. The best humoured soul in the world.

DEL. Do you know, Master Peter, if I thought there was any chance of our living comfortably together, I shouldn't mind making up to Gertrude myself.

PET. You!—you be hanged!

DEL. Hanged! what for, I should like to know? I question now if I couldn't afford to marry as well as young



Sneek—he doesn't get much out of Nickem's pocket, I'll swear.

PET. Well, you needn't trouble your head about it, because you shan't have her.

DEL. Why, farmer Spyk, what have you to do with it?—suppose I choose, and she chooses, you're neither her father nor her mother. If you put my blood up, I'll go and ask her at once.

PET. And if you do, you'll put *my* blood up—and then I shall knock you down.

DEL. Knock me down! Donner and blitzen!

PET. Don't provoke me! I'm getting desperate—I mea to marry Gertrude myself, if she'll have me, and I'll fight any body for her, with fists, knives, pistols—anything!

Enter ERNESTINE.

ERN. Heyday! heyday! what is all this noise about—and threat of fighting?

DEL. It's farmer Spyk, here, and please you, Mamzelle, he threatens to knock me down if I go a-courting to Gertrude—and all in an honest way, too.

ERN. To Gertrude!—why how long have you taken this fancy into your head?

PET. Why, not five minutes, mamzelle, and he has the impudence to set himself up against me, who have been in love with her—more than half an hour!

ERN. And where is the fair object of your contention?—what does she say to these sudden passions?

PET. I'm waiting to know what she'll say to mine—but she's a plaguy long time with the Captain. He's the only

rival I'm afraid of; she seems deuced fond of him—and he raves about her.

ERN. (*alarmed*) He does! (*Recovering herself.*) But, of course—I desired him.

PET. You desired him, mamzelle.

ERN. Yes; I commanded him to make love to her.

PET. Well, he wont be broke for disobedience, then—that's all I can say—for he does make love to her most furiously. I caught him myself with his arm round her waist, this morning, and I dare say it's round it now if the truth was known; but I can't see, for that beastly holly-bush.

(DELVE *steals out.*)

ERN. Why, where are they, then?

PET. She was to meet him at the sun-dial, and I saw him slinking through the trees yonder; and just now I'm almost certain I caught a glimpse of them at the end of that walk.

ERN. (*Aside.*) I don't like this account; I'm afraid I've acted very sillily. I repented of the freak almost as soon as I left them; but my pride would not suffer me to return. The girl's pretty—very pretty—and if Amersfort, enraged at my indifference, should, out of mere spite—such things have happened—Oh, dear! I do not like it at all.

PET. There she goes! there she goes!

ERN. With the Captain?

PET. No, by herself—and there's Delve after her as hard as he can scamper! I'll follow—I'll—no, I can't— I can't move—I—I feel very ill—my head spins round like a top. Here comes the Captain.

ERN. Amersfort! I am ready to sink—

PET. Don't—don't—mamzelle—for I've no strength to catch you.

Enter AMERSFORT.

AMER. (*Aside.*) She is here—now for the trial. (*Aloud.*) Mademoiselle Ernestine, I came to seek you.

ERN. Indeed, sir; and for what purpose? I thought I had desired you to pay your attentions in another quarter for the present.

AMER. It is in perfect accordance with that desire that I have sought this interview. I am anxious to express my gratitude for the blessing which you have so unexpectedly bestowed on me.

ERN. What do you mean, sir?

AMER. I mean, Mamzelle Rosendaal, that the heart you treated with so much indifference has been accepted by one of the most lovely and amiable of your sex; and that, in the affection of Gertrude, it has found a balm for all the wounds you had so wantonly inflicted on it.

PET. There!—there! I told you so.

ERN. Upon my word, sir!—and you have the assurance to make this confession to me?

AMER. Why not, Mademoiselle? We are not masters of our affections, and, therefore, I will not reproach you. But can you be surprised that I should weary of loving one who did not love me? or that, stung to the quick by your contempt, I should be more sensible to the kindness and sympathy of another? Gertrude is lovely!

PET. She is!—she is!

AMER. The sweetest temper'd—the most frank and affectionate of beings!

PET. Too true!—too true!

AMER. The possession of her heart is a blessing monarchs might envy me.

PET. I shall go mad!

AMER. And monarchs have matched with maidens as lowly born, and far less deserving.

ERN. Enough!—enough! sir.

PET. No, it's not enough! He can't say too much about her. She hasn't her equal upon earth.

AMER. You are right, farmer; and I thank you for the honest warmth with which you justify my choice.

PET. Your choice! Don't touch me.

AMER. My sweet bride—my affianced wife — Madame Amersfort shall thank you in person.

PET. His wife! Madame Amersfort! Cruel, faithless Gertrude!

AMER. Faithless!—why, did you ever propose to her?

PET. No; but I meant to do so! O dear!

ERN. Your wife?—your wife?—and you really intend to marry this orphan girl?

AMER. I have desired my lawyer to prepare her marriage contract, which shall be signed this evening.

PET. Oh!

ERN. Not in this house, sir. I will not be insulted to that extent. I go this moment to inform my father.

AMER. The Baron Van Rosendaal is already informed, and approves of my intentions.

ERN. Approves! We shall see, sir! we shall see!

(*Air from "The Challenge."*)

ERNESTINE.

Such perfidy was never known—
I joy in its unmasking!

PETER.

O Gertrude, you've a heart of stone,
To break a heart so true!



AMERSFORT.

Why, had she promised you?

PETER.

No, there her falsehood's shewn!
So bent was she on jilting me,
She could not wait for asking.

AMERSFORT.

Well there with you I must agree,
Such falsehood ne'er was known.

PETER.

I'm sure with me you must agree,
Such falsehood ne'er was known.

ERNESTINE.

'Tis well, 'tis well, sir, we shall see,
Such falsehood ne'er was known.

(*Exit* ERNESTINE.)

AMER. (*Aside.*) Yes, yes, my fair tyrant, your father is in the plot! I think we have you now. (*Aloud.*) Well, my good friend, I must say I pity you extremely. You have lost a model of a wife.

PET. Don't!—don't!

AMER. But where is she?—where is my adored Gertrude? (*Enter* GERTRUDE, *dressed as a bride.* AMERSFORT *makes signs to her not to speak, and points at* PETER, *who stands in an attitude of comic despair, with his back towards them.*) I must hasten to find her. I cannot bear to be an instant from her sight! Oh, Peter!—Peter! what a treasure has escaped you!

(*Exit* AMERSFORT, *exchanging signs with* GERTRUDE.)

PET. (*Soliloquizing.*) Escaped me!—as if I was a mad dog, and it was an escape for Gertrude! An escape!—and I have let her escape! Well, well, she wont be Madame Swyzel, nor Madame Sneek; and that rascal Delve hasn't got her—

that's one comfort. Comfort, I talk of comfort, I shall never know comfort again! Oh, Gertrude! Gertrude!

GER. (*Advancing.*) Did you call me, Peter?

PET. Hah! what do I see? There's a dress—a wedding dress! It is!—it is!

GER. It is—it is a very beautiful dress, as you say, and I don't wonder you start to see me in such a dress; but as the bride of a Captain, you know—

PET. It is true, then, you are going—going to marry Captain Amersfort?

GER. Ah, he has told you, then? Well, I was in hopes of giving you an agreeable surprise.

PET. An agreeable surprise!

GER. Why, are you not delighted, Peter, at my good fortune?

PET. Delighted!

GER. Only think—a poor orphan girl like me, whom nobody loved, and nobody cared about—

PET. It isn't true. I cared about you—I loved you—doated on you.

GER. You, Peter!—you! Mercy on me! And why didn't you tell me so then?

PET. Because I didn't know it myself then; but I do now, Gertrude—I do now.

GER. Now!—now that it is too late!

PET. But is it?—is it too late? You are not married yet.

GER. No, but I have promised. The contract is ordered, and this beautiful dress was bought by the Captain on purpose. You would not have me behave so shamefully to one who loves me dearly?



PET. But I—I love you dearly.

GER. Ah, if you had but said so an hour ago! But you thought of everybody but me.

PET. I know it—I know it. But then nobody thought of you; and now everybody does, and it proves to me that you—you are the only girl in the world that I ought to marry; and, if you won't have me, I—I know what I'll do.

GER. Dear me, Peter, what?

PET. I'll fling myself into the canal.

GER. Nonsense!

PET. You see if I don't, then. I'm not desperate till I take anything in my head; but then nothing can turn me.

(*Air, "Take care of the corner."*)

PETER.

I rush to my fate,
And my funeral straight-
Way shall follow my latest transgression!
And in the church-yard
It shall go very hard,
But it meets with your bridal procession!
When my coffin appears
You will melt into tears,
And your friends in your grief will be sharers.

GERTRUDE.

O yes, not only I
But my husband will cry—
"Stand out of the way" to the bearers!

PET. Laughed at! I'll jump over the wall, here, into the canal, before your face.

GER. Indeed you sha'n't. Peter, don't be a fool. (*Trying to hold him.*) Oh dear, he will! Murder!—help!

Enter ERNESTINE.

ERN. What's the matter now?

GER. O, Mamzelle, help me to hold Peter. He wants to drown himself.

ERN. He is sillier than ever I supposed him, if he would drown himself for so worthless a person. I wonder you are not ashamed to look me in the face.

GER. I'm very sorry, Mamzelle. I know you only lent me a lover; but how can I give him you back, if he wont go?

ERN. Cease your impertinence. Your simplicity is all affected.

GER. I'm sure, Mamzelle, if the Captain will only consent, I'll give him up with pleasure.

PET. You will?

ERN. You will? Hark ye, Gertrude! Don't think that I care the least about Captain Amersfort—his behaviour has entirely destroyed any little affection I might have had for him; but, only to vex him in my turn, if you will promise not to marry him—

PET. Do, do.

ERN. I will settle a handsome income on you.

PET. There! there!

ERN. Tell him you do not love him.

PET. Yes, yes.

ERN. That you love another—anybody.

PET. Yes, me!—I'm ready to be loved.

GER. (*Aside.*) I see him!—now's the time. (*Aloud.*) Well, Mamzelle, I believe it would be only the truth—I have a great respect for Captain Amersfort, but I certainly do not love him—and perhaps I do love somebody else.

(*Looking at* PETER.)

PET. Oh, Gertrude!

Enter AMERSFORT, *unseen by them.*

GER. But how can I consent to make him wretched? If there was any chance of your making it up—if I thought you still loved the Captain, and would make him happy in the avowal?

ERN. Would that decide you?

PET. Oh, do, then!—do! (*To* ERNESTINE.)

ERN. What would you have me say?

GER. That you forgive him, and are willing to marry him, if I give him up.

ERN. Well, then, I am willing!

AMER. (*Takes her hand.*) And so am I!

GER. And so am I.

PET. Hurrah!

ERN. Captain Amersfort here? This was a plot, then!

AMER. Own that it was to secure your happiness, Ernestine, and you make mine for ever.

ERN. Well, I believe I deserved this lesson.

PET. And I'm sure I did.

GER. You've made your mind up, then, that I shall marry you now.

PET. To be sure I have.

GER. Well, as you say, when you once *do* take a thing in your head, nothing can turn you, I suppose it's useless to say "No." There is my hand, dear Peter.

AMER. And I suppose I may let him the farm now.

GER. If you please, Captain.

AMER. And give him the two thousand crowns that I desired Van Nickem to settle on you as a wedding portion.

PET. Ah! then that's why young Sneek—but no matter.

FINALE.—(*Trio, from "The Challenge."*)

PETER, GERTRUDE, AND ERNESTINE.

She / He } is mine. She / He } is mine. Let the stars work their will,
If our patrons approve, nothing now can go ill;
But the lover we lend must with them make his way,
Or our dealings will end with the devil to pay.

ERNESTINE.

Should they not then befriend us?

GERTRUDE.

I will hope for the best,
If one kind friend will lend us
His hands to move the rest
Will you ask?

PETER.

No, do you.

GERTRUDE. (*to audience.*)

Do you like it?

PETER.

Say you do.

ALL.

O happy hour! O joyous night!
Our patrons share in our delight.

She / He } is mine! She / He } is mine! Let the stars work their will,
Since our friends have approved, nothing now can go ill;
The lover we lent has with them made his way,
And their smiles of content all our toils overpay.

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A VAUDEVILLE.

By J. R. PLANCHÉ.

FIRST PERFORMED AT

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MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 29*th*, 1834.

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1834.





DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Governor of Seville	Mr. Bland
Pequillo	Mr. Liston
Julian	Mr. Howard
Tragala	Mr. Salter
Felipa	Mrs. Macnamara
Beatrix	Miss Norman.

Villagers, Male and Female.

*** *The Airs of the Vaudevilles in "My Friend, the Governor," are selected from a Collection of Spanish Melodies, published by* Mr. Chappell, 50, *New Bond Street, and are referred to by the first lines of the original songs.*





"MY FRIEND, THE GOVERNOR."

SCENE I.

Interior of a neat Spanish farm-house. A window R. H., *a door* L. H., *both practicable. At the back, large folding-doors, opening on the garden, and shewing a trellis, covered with a grape vine. A table, chairs, &c.* JULIAN *discovered finishing a letter.*

JUL. (*Laying down his pen, and reading what he has written.*) "Yes, dearest Anna, I love thee—I adore thee! In all Andalusia there breathes not so devoted a servant to thy beauty! But, alas! what hope is there for poor Julian? It were madness to suppose that the Governor of Seville will bestow his only daughter upon the son of a poor gardener, who exists but by his bounty! Farewell, then, dearest Anna! This is the last day I shall pass at Villa Verde; to-morrow I will quit for ever these scenes of a hopeless passion, assured that you will soon forget even the name of the unhappy Julian!" (*Rising.*) Yes; there is no other way. (*Folding letter.*) I shall be miserable!—but Anna will soon forget me, and be happy with some nobler, though not

fonder, lover; and her father will not have to accuse Julian of ingratitude as well as presumption! But how to deliver this note safely?—for I will not see her again myself. Ah! Beatrix.

Enter BEATRIX.

Come hither, Beatrix! I want you to do me a favour. Perhaps it will be the last I shall ask of you!

BEA. Santa Catalina! Are you going to hang yourself, then—for you don't look in dying condition?

JUL. Beatrix, you are a good, kind girl, and I am sure I may trust you. I want you to place this note in the hands of the Senorita Anna.

BEA. The governor's daughter?

JUL. Even she! You are in the habit of taking her a nosegay every morning—place this note in that which you take her to day.

BEA. Well, if I didn't think so! I said to myself, no longer ago than last Friday, as sure as fate our young master, Julian, is in love with the Senorita Anna! Ever since you have been permitted to give her lessons in drawing you have been quite a different person! You never dance of an evening, as you used to do—you never sing, except some melancholy ditty that's enough to make one run and take the veil in the nearest convent! and that, to my thinking, is the most desperate act a woman can be driven to.

JUL. Ah! Beatrix, may your light heart never sink beneath the burden of a hopeless attachment.

BEA. Not it; my heart would do like your old cousin Tragala's mule, Captain, kick off any burden that gave it the least inconvenience.

JUL. Aye, 'tis easy talking, Beatrix.

("Light of my soul.")

Faint is my heart thus with sorrow o'er laden!

BEATRIX.

Faint heart, you know, never won a fair maiden!
If a lover gave *me* one, a huge burden bearing,
I'd send it him back as too heavy for wearing!

Does the lady tell you your attachment is hopeless?

JUL. No; but her father would never consent, I am certain!

BEA. Her father is so fond of yours there is no knowing what he wouldn't consent to. Why don't you get the old gentleman to ask?

JUL. Oh, it would be presuming too much upon the extraordinary kindness the Governor has already shewn to us, and, perhaps, cause the withdrawal of his favour from my parents. No—no; give her that letter: it is to bid her adieu for ever! I shall leave this place to-morrow.

BEA. You shall do no such thing! I'll talk to the Senorita myself—nay, to the Governor, if needs must!

JUL. Beatrix! not for the world!

BEA. Hush!—here comes your mother—not a word to her—leave all to me, I tell you.

Enter FELIPA.

FEL. Beatrix! Beatrix!—run to the gate. I do believe here is our cousin Tragala.

BEA. (*Looking out.*) Yes—yes!—there he is! Though I haven't seen him these six years, I remember him well enough. The queer little body!

TRAGALA. (*Without.*) Halloo! house! anybody at home?

BEA. Yes—yes! coming—coming! (*Runs out.*)

FEL. Well, Julian, are you still bent on this journey to Madrid that you talked of?

JUL. Yes, mother; I think of leaving to-morrow.

FEL. So soon? Well, I am glad you have not left us before Tragala's arrival, as he has never seen you since you were in your cradle.

Enter TRAGALA.

Ah! my dear cousin!—welcome to Andalusia—welcome to Villa Verde!

TRA. Thanks—thanks, cousin Felipa! Why, here you are, looking as blooming—Santiago! who could believe there was only a year or two's difference between us? You look more like thirty than forty—and forty you must be, because I'm forty-three, and I left Salamanca a year after your boy was born, and he must be—

FEL. Nineteen;—and here he is to answer for himself. This is my Julian!

TRA. Give me thy hand, boy! 'Gad so!—A fine fellow, and very much like you, only darker. There's not much of his father about him!

FEL. Law! don't you think so?

("*La Guarracha.*")

FELIPA.

Well, there you surprise me, 'twas always confest,
That nothing more like him could be!

TRAGALA.

If *you* think he is so—a fig for the rest,
Your opinion at once decides me!

That a likeness exists, in a feature or so,
To the mother one sees very well;
But whether a son's like his father or no,
There is only the mother can tell!

But where is he?—where is my cousin, Pequillo?

FEL. He's gone to the Governor; but he'll be back immediately. Our garden joins that of the residence.

TRA. The Governor!—what Governor?

FEL. The Governor of Seville, who has a country house here at Villa Verde. He is our great friend. It is on that account we sent for you.

(BEATRIX *appears, and makes signs to* JULIAN, *who goes out with her.*)

TRA. Well, tell me, then, for I am curious, I own, to know why Pequillo wrote to me to sell all my mules and quit Oviedo, and come here post haste. I thought he was mad when I first read his letter. However, as I longed to see you all, I determined on risking the journey; but, as to selling my mules—no, no!—you don't catch me at that, cousin, till I have a good reason for it. How the devil am I to live, d'ye think, unless you've made your fortunes, and are going to keep me like a gentleman?

FEL. Well, you are not so much out there!—we have made our fortune, and we have sent for you to share in the good things that are daily showered upon us by the new Governor!

TRA. How? how?—let's hear that again!

FEL. I tell you the Governor is our great friend. As soon as ever he arrived here, and heard the name of my husband, he sent for him, asked him a great many questions, and was so pleased with him, that he gave us this pretty farm to live

in—wouldn't suffer him to work as a gardener any longer! And not only does he give us every thing we can desire for ourselves, but all Pequillo chooses to ask for others; so that my good man is courted throughout the province like a prime minister!

TRA. Basta!—this is a fairy tale!

FEL. It's true, I can assure you! His excellency visits us daily, and anticipates every wish we can form for ourselves or our neighbours. (*Shouts without.*) Hark! do you hear those shouts?

TRA. Hear, quotha! Why, d'ye think I'm deaf? The rogues are cracking their lungs with vivas! I suppose the Governor is coming now!

FEL. The Governor! Bless you, they don't make half so much fuss with him!—that's my husband they are cheering!

TRA. Pequillo?

FEL. Yes; from here you may see him, surrounded by the villagers!

TRA. (*Looking out.*) Why, they want to carry him!

FEL. And they will, too; they do every day! It's almost provoking. He can't step over the threshold, poor fellow, without being half killed through affection and gratitude!

TRA. Diavolo!—there he goes up!

FEL. And here they come! (*Shouts nearer.*)

Enter VILLAGERS, *bearing* PEQUILLO *on their shoulders.*

CHORUS. ("*Viva Enrico.*")

Viva Pequillo!
Viva Pequillo!

Care, at his presence, disappears!
May he live a thousand years!—
And we to see!
May he live a thousand years!
Viva Pequillo!

PEQ. My good friends—my very dear friends, allow me to make one observation. I am convinced of your kind intentions; but if you really wish me to live a thousand years, you had better set me down as soon as possible; for if you break my neck—as you have very nearly done three times to day—I cannot live another hour to oblige any of you!

ALL. Long live Pequillo! (*They place him on the table.*)

PEQ. It is my earnest wish, I can assure you, for your sakes, as well as my own! My very dear friends, I am proud to say that I return laden with favours for you—granted, at my request, by the most illustrious Senor, his excellency the Governor of Seville.

ALL. Long live Pequillo!

PEQ. Silence! while I read the list of benefactions! Senora Manuela, your husband shall be sent to the galleys, as you desire! Matteo Ronda, you are appointed to the vacant clerkship at Coverna, on condition that you learn to read and write as soon as possible! Ambrosio Cazalla is to be an alguazil in the place of Gil Perez, deceased—being proverbially qualified!—"Set a thief," et cætera. Fernando Lora is to receive four reals a week, for doing nothing; and his brother, Juan, three more, for helping him!

TRA. 'Sdeath! if he gives away at this rate there'll be nothing left for me! Pequillo! cousin Pequillo! don't forget poor Tragala!

PEQ. Tragala!—my dear cousin! (*Jumping down.*) Come to my arms! Forgive—my good friends—forgive this tribute to nature—this moment, snatched from public service, at the call of private affection! Senors, I present to you my worthy cousin, Ignacio Tragala—a highly respectable muleteer of Oviedo—who has come all these leagues to embrace his beloved relations. If I am dear to you, let Tragala be also.—"Love me, love my dog!"

ALL. Viva Tragala!

PEQ. Thanks—thanks! And now your pardon for a short time. There is the paper, signed by his excellency; you can read the rest of the grants yourselves; and, if you have any more petitions to present—(*all produce papers immediately.*) When I say "if!"—as if there could be a doubt of it!—they grow in the hedges, I'm sure! Well, well, (*taking them*) they shall be attended to! I will speak to my friend, the Governor; but they must all lie upon the table for the present! I'm going to be very busy—important affairs!—can see nobody again till the afternoon. The audience is ended!—quit the presence!

ALL. Long live Pequillo!

PEQ. And Tragala!

ALL. And Tragala! Viva Pequillo and Tragala!

(*Exeunt* VILLAGERS.)

PEQ. You see—you hear!—this it is to be related to distinguished merit! The poor devils now will study how they may best curry favour with thee, cousin, and so secure thy interest with Sancho Pequillo, the intimate friend of the Governor of Seville! But come, wife, quick—some refreshment for our cousin—he has come off a long journey, and

must be famished. What will you eat? What will you drink? We have the best of both, and plenty of it!

TRA. Nothing! nothing at present! My astonishment has taken away my appetite! My curiosity must be satisfied before I can think of my stomach!

FEL. Well, while you chat here, I'll lay the cloth in the next room.

PEQ. Aye, do; and get up a bottle of that Val de Pennas—the last batch my friend, the Governor, sent me! (*Exit* FELIPA.) Such stuff! How you will smack your lips at it! I drink nothing else!

TRA. What is the meaning of all this? How have you jumped into such favours—such fortune?

PEQ. Hang me, my good fellow, if I know!—and hang me still higher if I care! My conscience acquits me of any base intrigue or degrading solicitation. My friend, the Governor, saw me, and liked me. There was nothing, I hope, so wonderful in that! My friend, the Governor, is a sensible man—a man of discrimination. My character was spotless—my person prepossessing. He wanted a friend, and he chose me; and, now, what do you want? Speak!—don't be mealy-mouthed! Anything that is in our power—it shall be granted immediately. Diablo! you shall find I've not brought you all the way from Oviedo for nothing! Speak!

TRA. Speak! zounds! I must have a little time to think first! I may as well ask for the best thing at once—and I haven't made up my mind as to what that may be! Besides, I can't believe—

Re-enter FELIPA.

FEL. Pequillo! Pequillo! his excellency is coming through the garden!

PEQ. My friend, the Governor? Bravo! now you shall see. You can't believe, can't you? It would serve you right to do nothing for you!

Enter the GOVERNOR.

GOV. Good morning, Felipa. I have followed you speedily, my good friend (*to* PEQUILLO), for I have some good news for you.

PEQ. (*Aside to* TRAGALA.) You can't believe—can't you. (*Aloud.*) Always delighted to see my noble friend, the Governor! (*Offering his hand, which the* GOVERNOR *presses kindly, while* PEQUILLO *casts a triumphant look at* TRAGALA). And what may be this news, my very kind friend? (*Shaking hands again, with the same glance at* TRAGALA.) There is only the family here; this is my cousin, Tragala, from Oviedo, an honest, worthy little fellow—in whose welfare I take a particular interest.

(*"Have you seen the silver mist?"*)

My lord, I beg to recommend,
To your most kind consideration,
My very good and worthy friend,
And once again my near relation.
He's gallop'd here at such a pace,
You can't be much surprised to learn he
Would like a snug and easy *place*—
To *rest in*, after such a journey.

GOV. That he is a kinsman of yours, Pequillo, is a sufficient recommendation. Let him think how I can serve him, and I will do it with pleasure.

PEQ. You hear, cousin. (*Aside.*) You can't believe—can't you. (*Aloud.*) His excellency will serve you with pleasure—you have only to think.

TRA. Most illustrious Senor! A thousand thanks, dear cousin!

FEL. (*To whom the* GOVERNOR *has been speaking.*) Oh! my Lord! This is too much!—how have we merited such great kindness. Pequillo—husband! Our dear Julian—his excellency has signified his intention of making our dear boy his own private secretary.

PEQ. Is it possible? Such an honour!

GOV. Julian is a youth of much promise. I have a great affection for him—and will make his fortune my peculiar care.

FEL. He is a good and a grateful lad, at least, my Lord; and I am sure will never do anything to make you repent your kindness; but what blessings are we not bound to pray for on the head of Senor Don Valarino. (*Snatching his hand, and kissing it.*)

GOV. Nay, nay—my good Felipa. (*Talks with her apart.*)

TRA. Valarino!

PEQ. It's the Governor's name—Valarino de Escamilla y Calaveros, Knight of the order of Alcantara, Governor of Seville, &c. &c. &c., my intimate friend.

TRA. Valarino! How odd that his name should be Valarino!

PEQ. How d'ye mean odd?

TRA. Why, don't you remember the Valarino who used to play such devil's tricks at Salamanca, when we both lived there, some twenty years ago? The young fellow, you

know, who was the terror of all the husbands in the city, and the ruin of all the girls.

PEQ. Well?—what then?

TRA. Oh, nothing! only, whenever I hear the name of Valarino, I always think of the mad pranks of that Valarino. I dare say his Excellency has heard—Pray, my lord, were you ever at Salamanca?

GOV. (*Starting, and aside.*) At Salamanca! (*Aloud.*) Never. Why do you ask?

TRA. Merely because you might remember a namesake of your lordship's—one Valarino, a student at the college there—a wild young rogue he was. Oh, ho! I could tell your lordship such stories of him—ha! ha! But if your Excellency was never there—

GOV. Are you from Salamanca, then? I thought your cousin said—

TRA. Oviedo. Yes, my lord, I came hither from Oviedo. I have lived at Oviedo these eighteen years—aye, full eighteen—because it was not quite two years after your misfortune, cousin, that I moved from Salamanca.

PEQ. Oh, what, the robbery? ah! that was a misfortune, indeed. My cousin alludes, my lord, to that circumstance I told your lordship of, that happened twenty years ago.

GOV. Yes—yes; I remember—you did tell me.

TRA. Twenty years! why, I do believe it's twenty years this very day.

PEQ. Why, so it is! sure enough! This is the fourteenth of June. Twenty years ago I was a ruined man; 500 pistoles—all the money I was worth in the world—the whole produce of the sale of my father's property—torn from me by a

band of brigands! and I, with a young wife, left destitute!—obliged to dig and delve for a living—might have starved, perhaps, if it hadn't been for her uncle, the old licentiate, who spared us a trifle now and then, and gave my boy Julian an education I could never have afforded him; and now, after twenty years' misery, here am I, happy as the day is long, and my son private secretary to the Governor of Seville. What a wonderful world it is! What astonishing turns of fortune!

Gov. You did not deserve to suffer, and fortune has made amends to you; she is often more just than we are inclined to believe her. I rejoice in being chosen as the instrument of her bounty, and, as this is the anniversary of your loss, here is an order on my intendant for 500 pistoles, (*writing it at the table,*) and I promise you that the same sum shall be paid annually to you from this day—(*gives him the paper.*) You must quit this farm, too, and reside in the palace. Your son is now my secretary, and a suite of apartments shall be appropriated to you, both here and at Seville. Let your cousin, I repeat, think how I can serve him—I will refuse nothing you can ask of me that does not affect my loyalty or my honour.

(*Presses his hand with great emotion, and exit, hurriedly.*)

Peq. Wife! cousin!—support me! I shall faint! No, I sha'n't!—I shall go wild. Five hundred pistoles a year, and apartments in the palace. Tra la la! Tra la la! Tra la!

Fel. Pequillo! Pequillo!

Tra. He *will* go wild, and I don't wonder at it—I'm beginning to feel a little light-headed myself. What shall I ask for? what shall I be? Groom of the chambers, or master of the horse?

PEQ. Apartments in the palace! I shall sleep in satin and dine upon cedar. I'll never sit down in such a chair as this again! There! there! *(Breaks one.)*

TRA. No more will I—there! there! *(Breaks another.)*

FEL. Nay, nay, don't destroy the furniture! somebody will jump to have it.

PEQ. Aye—well, to be sure—some poor devil may want it. But a man of my fortune and consequence—a gentleman with 500 pistoles a year, and the run of two palaces—the bosom friend of Senor Don Valarino de Escamilla y Calaveros, Governor of Seville, &c. &c. &c.!

FEL. And father of his private secretary! Where is Julian? I long to tell him of his good fortune. Julian! Julian! *(Exit.)*

TRA. Don Valarino! It's very odd, but I cannot get the idea out of my head.

PEQ. I never knew you had one in it before. What do you want to get rid of it for?

TRA. If the Governor had not said positively that he had never been at Salamanca—

PEQ. Why you are surely not such a fool as to fancy that my noble friend the Governor can be the same Valarino who was at college—a young vagabond, of neither fortune nor family, and who has been hanged or sent to the galleys, I'll be sworn, long before now. But even if he were, what's that to me, *now* that he is a governor?

TRA. Why, that's true! because Julian—Julian is a boy! Now, if you had a daughter—

PEQ. Well, and if I had a daughter?

TRA. Why, you see, I cannot for the life of me under-

stand *why* the Governor does all this. Great people do nothing for nothing. He must have some motive.

PEQ. I tell you it's his regard for me.

TRA. And I tell you I don't believe it then—*there!* and now it's out;—and I'm sure there must be something else at the bottom of it! Because it's not likely that—in short, as I said before, if you had a pretty daughter—

PEQ. Bah! stuff!—Perhaps you'll say its Beatrix?

TRA. Beatrix! no, no; he wouldn't make your son his private secretary, and give you five hundred pistoles a-year, and apartments in the palace, because he fancied your servant girl. No, no; its more likely that—but then he never was at Salamanca.

PEQ. Confound you!—what do you dwell upon that for? What has his being at Salamanca to do with the business?

TRA. It doesn't signify. He never was there, and so it can't be that—and there's an end of the matter. Where's this wine you spoke of?

PEQ. Not a drop shall you taste now till I know what ridiculous crotchets you've got in that wooden head of yours! If *I* am not the person he is attached to—who the devil else could it be, either here or at Salamanca?

TRA. Well, now, suppose—mind, I only say suppose—

PEQ. Well—suppose—suppose!

TRA. Suppose it was your wife!

PEQ. Wife!—my wife? What, Felipa? Why she's turned forty!

TRA. Ah, *now!* But I remember when she was only twenty, at Salamanca—and so might the Governor, if he had been there—and she was then the handsomest girl in the neighbourhood. And even now, I should like to know—a

woman's not so old at forty—and cousin Felipa's as comely a dame at this day as any you'll meet with in an hundred!

PEQ. Why you slanderous little villain!—you wouldn't dare to insinuate—

TRA. Oh! not I—not for a moment! But there's nothing very unnatural in the Governor's preferring her face to yours—or uncommon in a great man's patronizing a poor fellow for the sake of his good-looking wife!

PEQ. Uncommon!—no; but very alarming! The Governor was only thirty-eight last Wednesday—and I'm past fifty! Tragala—you *don't* think that—

PEQ. O dear no! I only remember young Valarino made love to all the pretty women in the city and suburbs, married or single; and, as you didn't live far off, and cousin Felipa was so pretty, and you so jealous—for you remember you *used* to be desperately jealous!

PEQ. Horribly!—frantically! I should be still if I thought—if I but suspected! Felipa *was* pretty—*more* than pretty—beautiful! and a shocking flirt at that time—coquetted with all the young fellows, and nearly drove me mad! But I don't believe—I never will believe—that my friend, the Governor—

TRA. Does it follow now, because he makes your son his secretary, that he should invite you all to live with him—in his own house—both here and at Seville! Isn't that odd?

PEQ. Don't, Tragala, don't!—you'll drive me crazy! And, now I think on't, he whispered my wife!—he didn't tell *me* first! He arranged with her before he spoke!

TRA. So he did, certainly! But wouldn't you have known if it had been the same Valarino?

PEQ. I never saw the villain!—I only heard of his tricks!

TRA. No more did I.

PEQ. And if Felipa did—she never told me!

TRA. It isn't likely she would!

PEQ. And, twenty years afterwards, to meet here in Andalusia, and renew—

TRA. But stop!—stop! We forget—you know, he says he never was at Salamanca!

PEQ. Aye, true—true; he does *say* so!

Enter JULIAN, *hastily.*

JUL. Oh, father! father!—let me say one word to you in private! Pardon me, cousin Tragala, but—

TRA. Oh, don't mention it! I'll go and draw up my petition to the Governor; for I may as well get what I can while I can. (*Exit* TRAGALA, *into room*, L. H.)

JUL. (*To* PEQUILLO.) You have heard, sir, of my appointment? The Governor has been so kind as to make me his secretary!

PEQ. Well—well!

JUL. You will think me mad, sir—but I have heard news which renders it impossible for me, with honour, to accept the place!

PEQ. *You* have heard news? (*Aside.*) *He* has heard news! He can't in honour accept the place! Then people have begun to talk—

JUL. The Governor is about to marry—

PEQ. To marry?—You don't say so!—The Governor marry?—what a relief! My dear Julian, you delight me.

JUL. You interrupt me, sir! The Governor is about to marry his daughter to a college acquaintance—to some one he knew at Salamanca!

PEQ. (*Starting.*) At Salamanca?—'tis false! He couldn't know anybody at Salamanca—he never was at Salamanca! You'll drive me mad!

JUL. Hush, sir!—for mercy's sake, not so loud! What I tell you is in perfect confidence—it must be kept a profound secret from every one! The Governor is most anxious that no one should be aware of his having been at Salamanca!

PEQ. Oh, he is, is he?—the monster of iniquity! (*Aside.*)

JUL. It is from his daughter, the Senorita Anna, I have learned this. I love her, sir!—love her to distraction!—and, hopeless of return, would have left Villa Verde to-morrow! I wrote to tell her so; she requested an interview—and, at the same time that she cheered my heart by acknowledging that she shared my passion, she drove me to despair, by revealing the intention of her father, which he but this morning communicated to her! Oh, sir, he is your friend—your bosom friend!

PEQ. No such thing!—no such thing!

JUL. Yes—yes! he loves you—he loves my mother!

PEQ. I know it!

JUL. He has said there was nothing he would not grant at your request! Oh, sir, I implore you to speak to him! Anna loves me—she will be miserable if sacrificed to another! Tell him this, sir—tell him I cannot with honour enter his service, unless—sir!—sir!—you do not listen to me!

PEQ. Yes—yes; I'll tell him. He *was* at Salamanca?

JUL. Santiago!—no! You mustn't name that—you would ruin all! He would never forgive Anna! he told her he had most important and private reasons for—

PEQ. Begone!—leave me! He *was* at Salamanca!

JUL. Father!

Re-enter TRAGALA, *with a paper.*

TRA. Well, have you finished?—because I see the Governor is coming through the garden again; and I have written my request down, and want you to present it.

(*Offering* PEQUILLO *the paper.*)

PEQ. Me?—never!

TRA. Why, cousin Pequillo!—Julian! what have you done to your father?

JUL. Sir! sir!—the Governor is returning! I dare not face him! Speak to him I entreat you, sir—he will do anything for you!

PEQ. Away, I say!

JUL. Nay, then, I shall seek my mother—she has influence with him, and will use it!

PEQ. She sha'n't!

TRA. A capital thought, lad!—and so will I! Cousin Felipa shall present my petition—he wont refuse her!

PEQ. Tragala!—if you dare!

TRA. Why, she's in the garden with him now!

PEQ. My wife in the garden?

TRA. Yes, with your friend, the Governor!

PEQ. My *friend?*—my *fiend!*—my demon! (*Throwing open the window, and calling loudly.*) Felipa! come hither this instant, I command you! Felipa, I say!

TRA. Will you present my petition or not?

PEQ. No, I tell you; no!

TRA. Then she shall!

PEQ. Never! (*Snatching, and tearing it up.*) There—

there—there! Now let her present it! Oh, I could tear *myself* to pieces! Felipa, I say!

TRA. He's mad!—stark, staring mad!

Enter FELIPA, BEATRIX, *and the* GOVERNOR.

("*Leave thy lone pillow.*")

FELIPA, BEATRIX, *and* GOVERNOR.

What is the matter?

All but PEQUILLO *and* FELIPA.

How he stares at her!
All his teeth chatter!
Reason seems fled!

TRAGALA.

Yes, he's gone raving!

JULIAN.

Such strange behaving!

TRAGALA.

Nothing like shaving
Quickly his head!

All but GOVERNOR *and* PEQUILLO.

See how his eyes roll—he must be insane, sir!

JULIAN.

Where is your pain, sir?

FELIPA.

It seems in his head.

PEQUILLO.

Wicked deceiver! (*To* FELIPA.)
Instantly leave her! (*To* GOVERNOR.)

All but PEQUILLO.

'Tis the brain fever!
Bear him to bed!
He must be bled!
Quick, shave his head!

PEQ. Off! off!—touch me at your peril! I am not mad, though I have enough to make me so! I am sensible—perfectly sensible—*too* sensible!

FEL. Then I wonder you an't ashamed of yourself—before his lordship!

PEQ. I wonder you an't ashamed of yourself—before his lordship!

GOV. Pequillo!

FEL. Husband!

PEQ. Husband! Wife!—crocodile! Hippopotamus! (*To* GOVERNOR.)

GOV. Why, Tragala, what is the matter with your cousin?

TRA. I know no more than your lordship; he flew out because I asked him to present a petition to your lordship, and tore it all to pieces.

GOV. Well, never mind that—I had already thought of you. Take this note to Col. Truxillo—you see the address—he will attend to the instructions.

TRA. I fly, most illustrious Senor—a thousand thanks, most excellent Don Valarino! (*Exit* TRAGALA.)

PEQ. (*Starting up.*) Aye, Valarino! Don *Valarino!*—do you hear that name? There was a Valarino at Salamanca!—was there not wife? But our friend, the Governor, never was at Salamanca!—he'll swear it!

JUL. (*Aside.*) Father—father!

PEQ. Out of my sight! (*To* JULIAN.) Leave the room! (*To* BEATRIX.) (*Exit* JULIAN *and* BEATRIX.)

GOV. (*Aside.*) What can he mean? Has he discovered—

PEQ. So—so; your lordship seems disconcerted!

FEL. Pequillo!

PEQ. Silence, unhappy woman! Enter that apartment.

FEL. I shall do no such thing! I insist upon knowing—

GOV. Yes—yes, my dear Felipa—it is my wish also.

PEQ. (*Aside.*) His dear Felipa!

FEL. In that case, my lord! (*Exit* FELIPA.)

GOV. Pequillo, hear me.

PEQ. You were at Salamanca!

GOV. I acknowledge it! But—

PEQ. He acknowledges! And I, who would have still doubted—tremble, guilty Governor!

GOV. (*Aside.*) Silence, I entreat you. My honour is in your hands! I confess myself the cause of your misfortune!

PEQ. Oh!

GOV. But surely I have made ample amends!

PEQ. Amends! Let me go—I can bear it no longer—I'm dying! But, before I die, you shall have all back—all the bribes you would have stopt my mouth with—all the money that I haven't spent—all the wine that I haven't drunk! There—there's the order you gave me this morning! (*Tearing it up.*) And now for the cellar—there's not much of your wine left; but, at any rate, you shall have the *bottles!* (*Rushes out.*)

GOV. Pequillo!—madman!

Re-enter FELIPA.

FEL. For mercy's sake, my lord, what does this mean?

GOV. My good Felipa, Pequillo has by some means discovered what I trusted to conceal from all the world; and, unless I can secure his silence, I must resign my situation, and perhaps quit Spain for ever!



FEL. *You*, our benefactor, leave us? Oh, wherefore?

Gov. Felipa, you behold in me that Valarino whose wild and licentious conduct rendered him so shamefully notorious at Salamanca! It was I who robbed your husband of his little patrimony, and lost it at the gaming table! You were reduced to beggary—I was forced to fly from my creditors! The death of an uncle in Mexico gave me wealth—and with wealth came prudence and repentance. I paid all my debts, married a virtuous and noble lady, and became Governor of Seville! Here, at Villa Verde, I found your husband toiling for his bread! He told me his story, and I discovered in him the man I had plundered! I blessed Providence that had enabled me to atone for my crime! For twelve months have I enjoyed the happiness of promoting his and your felicity, and of forwarding the interest of your son; but the inveterate resentment of Pequillo will frustrate all my hopes!

FEL. Oh, say not so!—he is passionate, but not revengeful.

Gov. I trust so, for all our sakes—for the sake of one who has never wronged him—for the sake, in short of my daughter.

FEL. Your daughter!

Gov. Yes; Julian loves her, and she returns his affection. I have long suspected it, and, in making him my secretary, was smoothing the path to his wishes. Their union was intended by me as the crowning reparation for all I had made you suffer; but, if, Pequillo denounces the governor of Seville as a robber—if, disgraced in the eyes of the public, and, worse than all, in those of my child, I am driven to hide my

shame in retirement, he will himself raise an insurmountable obstacle to the happiness of all.

FEL. Oh, my lord, he never will be so mad—so wicked. This noble reparation must melt his heart; and, for me, my lord, a mother's tears of joy must prove to you—(*About to kneel; he prevents her.*)

GOV. Be calm, dear Felipa, and speak to Pequillo.

PEQUILLO *enters, unseen by them, with a hamper full of bottles; he stops short on seeing the* GOVERNOR *supporting* FELIPA.

Shew him that it is the interest of all parties to be silent on this subject—that, for the sake of our children—

PEQ. *(Dropping the hamper.)* Their children! What do I hear? Don Valarino! (*Coming forward.*)

GOV. Pequillo! I have spoken to Felipa, and I leave you together. It depends entirely upon yourself whether or not I should call Julian my son. (*Exit.*)

PEQ. Julian—*his* son?

FEL. Yes, Pequillo—you have no notion of the Governor's kindness!

PEQ. Haven't I?

FEL. You will never be so silly as to bear malice against such a man. I'm sure I forgive him with all my heart.

PEQ. Impudence unparalleled!

Enter JULIAN.

JUL. Father!

PEQ. Father! How dare you call me father? I am not your father!—I disown you! I renounce you! go to the Governor!—He has called you his son.



JUL. Is it possible?—am I so happy?

PEQ. So happy!—unnatural cub!

FEL. Unnatural! on the contrary.

PEQ. Aye, on the contrary—right! quite right!—She can joke upon it.

FEL. What is there unnatural, pray, in his wish to marry so lovely a girl as the Senorita Anna?

PEQ. He—he marry the Governor's daughter? Impossible! and you know it.

FEL. Yes, of course, if you go and blaze the whole story! that's what the Governor says.

PEQ. Peace—woman! You make my hair stand on end!

Shouts. Enter TRAGALA *as an Alguazil, followed by* PEASANTS *and* BEATRIX.

TRA. Long live the Governor! Long live the noble Don Valarino! See here, cousin!—I am appointed—I am principal Alguazil of Villa Verde. Look at my official costume! respect my authority! Cousin Pequillo! I owe this to your honourable friend, the Governor.

PEQ. Honourable!—*he* honourable! He's a villain—a seducer!—I may say a robber!—for he has robbed me of—

FEL. Pequillo! I entreat you!

PEQ. *You!*

JUL. You will offend him for ever.

PEQ. I wish it!

TRA. You will be arrested for sedition!

PEQ. With all my heart!—I'm desperate! and don't care what becomes of me. Arrest me, Alguazil! (*To* TRAGALA.)

FEL. Heed him not, Tragala, he's frantic. This is like one of the old fits he used to have at Salamanca.

PEQ. Sala—I forbid you to name that place. And you—(*to the Villagers*)—what do you all want here?

BEA. Why, the answer to their petitions, of course.

PEQ. Answer?—there's no answer! I have no interest, no credit! there, there are your petitions—take 'em amongst you! (*Crumpling them up, and flinging them at their heads.*)

TRA. But the Governor?

PEQ. Smother the Governor!

ALL. Treason!—arrest him!

TRA. You'll be hanged!

PEQ. I should like it—I'm weary of my life, and I should like to be hanged particularly. Do your duty, Alguazil!—I say, smother the Governor!—down with the Governor!—no Governor!—no government! *There*, I'm a rebel—a traitor—arrest me, Alguazil. (*Collaring* TRAGALA.)

ALL. Yes, yes; arrest him!

Enter GOVERNOR.

GOV. What means this tumult?

FEL. Oh, my lord, Pequillo is certainly distracted!

PEQ. Not at all! I say to his face—smother the Governor! and I wish him to arrest me—imprison me—hang me—at any rate, it will shew I am no friend of his—that I do not wink at his iniquities!

GOV. Enough—enough, sir! If such is your determination—if nothing less than public exposure will satisfy you, come what may, I will here acknowledge, to all present—

PEQ. No, no; there's no occasion for that—I don't choose that every body should know.

GOV. But you have left me no other course; and, for fear of worse suspicions, I insist on proclaiming—

PEQ. Proclaiming!—I wont be proclaimed! Hold your tongue, I say!

GOV. Then listen to reason—give me a patient hearing in private. Felipa, Julian—one moment. Tragala, let those good people retire for the present—I would be alone with Pequillo.

(*Exeunt* TRAGALA *and* BEATRIX, *with* VILLAGERS.)

FEL. Come Julian. Pequillo!—ungrateful Pequillo! you have yet much to learn.

PEQ. The devil I have!

FEL. How you will blush when you know all!

(*Exeunt* FELIPA *and* JULIAN.)

PEQ. I've no doubt of it! much to learn! What a horrible interview!

GOV. I know not how you became acquainted with the fact of my having wronged you.

PEQ. Permit me to sit down.

GOV. But the confession of an offence is said to be half way towards its reparation.

PEQ. It is an aggravation. (*Starting up again.*)

GOV. Say not so; I was young—very young—surrounded by dissolute companions—returning late at night from one of our usual orgies—flushed with wine—

PEQ. More shame for you.

GOV. I grant it; yet you yourself were to blame—

PEQ. Me! Ah, they always say that!

GOV. I should never have taken your money by force.

PEQ. My money

Gov. Had you not dropped your leathern sack, in your alarm, at our approach—had not your fears and those of Tragala magnified three or four half drunken students into a band of brigands.

Peq. What do I hear? My money—my leather sack? Persecuting fiend!—were you also the plunderer of my property?

Gov. Also!—what mean you? I confess, to my shame, that I picked up the money you had abandoned—that, instead of seeking next day for its owner, I lost it at the gaming table; but, surely, the return I have made you since our meeting in Andalusia—

Peq. What, is this *all?* Did I not hear you say to the partner of your guilt—

Gov. Partner? I had no partner! My mad companions pursued you with shouts, and saw me not pick up the money. They never knew of my possessing it—I alone was the criminal; but twenty years of repentance—

Peq. Twenty years! True—true!—this is—as you said—Why, then, after all—Julian—

Gov. I am aware of his love for my daughter—I consent to their union. Can I more fully prove—

Peq. Prove! I'm delighted to prove that I've been a most prodigious donkey! My dear friend, the Governor! My son marry your daughter?—can you condescend?

Gov. Condescend!—alas! I have been guilty of an act that renders the alliance a condescension on your side.

("O bear not the Bondage.")

O, be it the pride of the Spaniard to feel
That crime can corrupt the best blood of Castile—
That birth cannot shelter, nor wealth render free,
The coward Hidalgo—the servile Grandee—



Before man's true honour all other rank fades,
'Tis virtue enobles and vice that degrades!

PEQ. My dear friend, the Governor, pardon, in your turn, all my follies; but I had not been jealous for nearly twenty years, and there was a great accumulation—

GOV. Jealous!

PEQ. Never mind!—we'll drop the subject. Felipa—Cousin Tragala—Julian—everybody!

Enter Omnes.

It's all settled—I've been a great fool, and I'm glad of it! My dear wife—my *own* son! He's as like me as ever he can stare!

FEL. So I always thought, but Tragala says—

TRA. And I say still—

PEQ. Hold your tongue, you fool! It was all through your ridiculous fancies that I—but, no matter—my dear son, my friend, the Governor, consents to your being his *son*-in-*law*. Our little misunderstanding is explained away. I'm the happiest fellow in all Spain! Who's got any petitions? Who wants anything in the world? Can I do anything for anybody here? Now's your time—I'm in the best of all possible humours. (*To the Audience.*) Are you?—I hope you are. Be generous, like me, and forgive the past follies of "my friend, the Governor."

FINALE. ("*Iberia, thy Trumpets are Sounding.*")

TRAGALA.

The torments of jealousy ended,
Suspicion for ever at rest,
That our patrons we have not offended,
Their hands now alone can attest.

BEATRIX.

Our scenes from the Spanish we drew—
But we look for the Spanish from you.

GOVERNOR.

Must the houses we hope to obtain
Prove nothing but "castles in Spain?"

PEQUILLO.

Oh, smile on our humble endeavour,
Forget and forgive as we do,
And let "*my* friend, the Governor," ever
Be *your* friend, the Governor, too!

CHORUS.

Oh, smile on our humble endeavour, &c.

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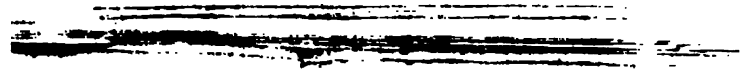
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THE

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A DRAMA,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY MRS. PLANCHÉ.

FIRST PERFORMED AT

THE THEATRE ROYAL, HAYMARKET,

JUNE 19*th*, 1834.

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1834.





DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The Emperor Paul I.	Mr. Haines
Grand Duke Alexander	Mr. Brindal
Count Soltikoff	Mr. Strickland
Count Terskey	Mr. Monroe
Ivan Daniloff (*Sledge-driver*)	Mr. F. Vining
Alexy Ratsikoff	Mr. Buckstone
Catharine Soltikoff	Mrs. Nisbett
Fœdora (*her attendant*)	Mrs. Humby.



THE

SLEDGE-DRIVER.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

An Apartment in the House of COUNT SOLTIKOF, *at Petersburg; table, with writing materials, looking-glass, &c.*

Enter FŒDORA *and* ALEXY.

FŒD. Dear, dear, this jeweller will never come. There's my lady, all ready dressed, and waiting with, for *her*, great patience, for her new ornaments. She would make me dress her so soon for the ball, on purpose to try the effect of these jewels, and now they are not here. I wouldn't be the jeweller for a trifle, if he does not come soon. Oh! here he is! No! it's that troublesome little man of the grand duke's, Alexy.

Enter ALEXY.

Well, what has brought you here?

ALEXY. I am come with a message, sweet Fœdora! from my master, the Grand Duke Alexander, to your noble lady, the Countess Catharine Soltikof.

FŒD. A pretty messenger his highness has chosen, truly! What a funny little thing you are for a man! ha, ha, ha!

ALEXY. Don't laugh at me, pretty Fœdora!—it hurts my feelings to be laughed at by you!—I can't bear it! for, oh, gentle Fœdora! you don't know how much I love you.

FŒD. Ha, ha, ha! You are very good, but pray don't give yourself the trouble to do that.

ALEXY. Trouble! sweet Fœdora! it's no trouble! Oh, yes, but it is a trouble, too; for you can't think, precious Fœdora! how it worries me!

FŒD. Oh, nonsense! don't think any more about it—put it quite out of your poor little head, for it's impossible that I can ever—

ALEXY. Impossible! lovely Fœdora! why is it impossible? Haven't I the honour of being chief attendant to his highness, the Grand Duke Alexander, son of the great autocrat, Paul the First, and heir apparent to the crown of Russia?

FŒD. *(Impatiently.)* Ah, I know all that Alexy, as well as you can tell me—

ALEXY. Don't interrupt me, *gentle* Fœdora! but let me tell you how very advantageous to you a union with me would be, in every respect. I am, as you know, sweet Fœdora, *rather* a favourite with his highness—that sha'n't go for nothing. Then, in person, dear Fœdora, I am not a man for *any* girl to turn up her nose at, and, in manners, gentle as a lamb—know how to submit—how to endure all things, for I have served in the army, under the great autocrat, Paul the First, and *that* sha'n't go for nothing! charming Fœdora!

FŒD. *That* may be all very true; but I am not going to try you, I can tell you; so you had better hold your tongue

upon the subject altogether, and not tease me any more about it.

ALEXY. Ah! I guess how it is—blind Fœdora!—you prefer Ivan—Ivan, the sledge-driver!

FŒD. Well, I confess it—I do!

ALEXY. Foolish Fœdora! to give your affections to a common fellow like that, instead of placing them upon one who has the honour to be—

FŒD. High in favour at court, I know—you have told me often enough, I'm sure, to make me remember it; but, do you know, that's one of the *many* reasons for my not preferring you—I (*looking cautiously about her*) *hate* your courtiers. Ivan—dear, rough, honest Ivan—is above anything of the sort; he has never *served* in the army—he isn't a submissive obedient creature, and that's the reason I love him.

ALEXY. But it will not last—cruel Fœdora!

FŒD. But, I tell you it will, sir—it shall!

ALEXY. Mad Fœdora!

FŒD. Well, well—but what *has* this to do with the message you had from the Grand Duke to the Countess Catharine?

ALEXY. Nothing!—at least, not much, sweet Fœdora; but coming from his highness, on an errand to his *love*, put me in mind of my own, dear Fœdora!

FŒD. (*Impatiently.*) The message—the message!

ALEXY. Well, then, the Grand Duke desires you will inform the Lady Catharine that it is his august intention to pay his respects to her before his Highness goes to the ball at the palace, this evening; and, sweet Fœdora! during the

ball, where my *immediate* presence will not be necessary, it is *my* intention to throw myself at your feet.

FŒD. You had better throw yourself into the river!—I shall be busy—I wont have you!

ALEXY. You are to blame, lovely Fœdora!

FŒD. I don't think so;—and I desire you will not come!

ALEXY. Well, dear Fœdora! be it so; as I told you, I can submit. But some day—oh, Fœdora!—you will repent having preferred a sledge-driver to your devoted servant, Alexy Ratsikof. Heaven preserve you—angelic Fœdora!

(*Exit.*)

FŒD. Did ever anybody hear such impertinence?—to sneer at my dear Ivan! Notwithstanding his rough dress—his rougher manners, and his poverty, he is worth a dozen of these fine gentlemen; at the same time, I really do believe Alexy is very fond of me, and it's rather a shame to laugh at him, as I do, for it's very pleasant to be loved, and have pretty things said to one, by *any* body, if it's ever such a little man—but, bless me, I'm forgetting his Highness's message to the Lady Catharine. I must go and deliver it, for there is no time to lose.

(*Is going off, and is met by* COUNT S. *and the* CHAMBERLAIN; *makes way for them, and curtseys.*)

COUNT. S. Fœdora! inform my daughter I would speak with her. *Instantly* I must see her—I have a communication for her from the Emperor.

FŒD. Yes, my lord. (*Aside.*) From the Emperor! it seems there's more than one of the imperial family sends messages to my Lady. (*Exit.*)

COUNT S. Yes, my dear friend, this very morning my august master himself sent for me, and these were his very words:—"Count Soltikof! your daughter's marriage with the Duke Müller is retarded much too long—it does not please me."—Great Emperor!—"See that it takes place in the course of eight days, at the latest. Bear in mind that such is my *wish*—take care that I don't have to *command* it!" Magnanimous autocrat!

CHAMB. And what was your answer, Count!

COUNT S. My answer! can't you guess it? It was very simple, and much to the purpose!—"The *wish* of your Majesty shall *instantly* be complied with; your servant's greatest happiness consists in obeying his gracious master."

CHAMB. But your daughter?

COUNT S. My daughter! yes—I know what you mean—and I am afraid I shall have some little trouble with her—for she has already tossed up her head about the Duke; but when she is informed that it is the Czar's *wish*, I feel convinced she will immediately accede.

CHAMB. She had better, my dear Count. The Emperor, as I think you must know, has no respect to persons—*all* must obey.

COUNT S. But, my good Count, every body—that is, every body who value their own comfort in the least, ought to make themselves acquainted with all his imperial highness's *wishes*, and obey them to the letter—I'm sure *I* would. Ah! here comes my daughter!

CHAMB. Then I will retire. I trust you will find *her* willing to obey them to the letter. (*Aside.*) But I doubt it.

(They retire up the stage.)

(*Exit* CHAMBERLAIN.)

Enter CATHARINE.

CATH. Oh! there you are, sir! do you know I am in a great rage?

COUNT S. In a great rage, my dear child!—what about?

CATH. Can you imagine anything more provoking?—that stupid jeweller has not sent home the pretty ornaments I ordered for the ball to-night, and here am I dressed and waiting for them for this hour.

COUNT S. But, my love, there is time enough—he'll send them presently, depend on it. Come here! I have something of great importance to talk to you about. Count Terskey, the Chamberlain—

CATH. Pray, pray, sir, don't talk to me about Counts and Chamberlains, when you see what trouble I'm in.

COUNT S. But, my dear child!—

CATH. But, my dear sir, I only ask you this—is it possible I can go to another ball at court in the same ornaments I wore at the last? To night, too, when all the ladies invited are trying to out-vie each other in dress and jewels! Would you have me patient when there is a chance of my being outshone by half the women in Petersburg. Me! the daughter of Count Soltikof—*(aside)*—and, perhaps, their future Empress! *(Aloud.)* It's not to be borne!

COUNT S. Well, my dear Catharine, we had better send to the man. (*Aside.*) I sha'n't get her to hear a word without she is pacified on this point.

Enter FŒDORA, *with a casket.*

FŒD. The jeweller, my lady!

CATH. Ah! ah! at last! give it me; how slow you are!



quick! quick!—oh! they are beautiful! look, papa!—(*To* FŒDORA.) There, you may go! (*Exit* FŒDORA.) Now, then, I'm better!

COUNT S. Then now, my love, I hope you are going to attend to me.

CATH. (*Looking at the jewels, delighted.*) With the greatest pleasure, papa.

COUNT S. I have, you know, my love, spoken to you before about that charming person, the Count Müller, as a fitting husband for you. A man whose birth is equal to your own—whose talents are—

CATH. (*Admiring her jewels.*) Brilliant, indeed!

COUNT S. I am glad to hear you acknowledge it! In person he is—

CATH. Perfectly beautiful!

COUNT S. Nay, there you flatter him! not beautiful—but he is very good-looking, and his character—

CATH. Stay—I do believe there's a flaw in that!—

COUNT S. Eh! how!—a flaw in his character! Why, Catharine—

CATH. O dear, dear!—I beg pardon—I was thinking only of my diamonds, and you were saying something about Count Müller, I believe. A very good match, no doubt, for some person—but I don't love the Count.

COUNT S. Love him! Well, but the Count is a very good man. You can—you do respect—esteem him.

CATH. (*Turning sharply round.*) But I wont marry him!

COUNT S. Oh, my Catharine! my child! don't say so—it is the particular *wish* of the august emperor; he has re-

quested the marriage may be solemnized within eight days from this time.

CATH. Has he? Then I refuse.

COUNT S. Catharine, you frighten me; you don't know the consequences of your refusal. You forget you have the happiness of living in the reign of Paul I.; do you know ask who and *what* he is?

CATH. "Emperor of all the Russians;" and pray let me ask you, sir, if *you* know who the grand duke is?

COUNT S. Of course I do; the second person in the kingdom—the august son of our august master.

CATH. Well, then, the second person in the kingdom, the august son of our august master, has requested me *not* to consent to this marriage. He loves me—he has told me so—he, the son of the czar, indifferent to all the ladies of the court, to *me* has paid homage.

COUNT S. But, Catharine, the hand of the Grand Duke Alexander is promised, by the emperor, to a princess of the house of Austria.

CATH. But the Grand Duke Alexander will refuse the alliance.

COUNT S. He'll never be so mad. The ambassador from Vienna is here—is going to the ball to-night in the hope of getting a favourable answer from the grand duke. Of course he will accept the proposals.

CATH. We shall see.

COUNT S. The emperor suspects your attachment, and, for that very reason, has ordered your immediate marriage.

CATH. Ah! ah! the great emperor *fears* me, does he?

COUNT S. I don't know whether he *fears* you or not, but he

has a very peculiar way of making people obey him; therefore, my love, you had better, for your own sake, for all our sakes, fear *him*, and make up your mind to obey him instantly, or the consequences—oh! I tremble to think of them.

CATH. Lov'd as I am by the grand duke, is it likely, is it natural that I will condescend to marry the Count Müller? Impossible!

COUNT S. (*Aside.*) What's to be done? What's to be done? My brain is in a whirl! I will go to my friend, Count Terskey, and hear what *he* says about it; he, perhaps, can advise me. (*Aloud.*) My love! I leave you for a while; reflect upon what I have said to you, and, above all, upon the czar's *wishes;* and, on my return, let me find you ready to accede to them. If she does not—oh dear! oh dear! (*Exit.*)

CATH. Marry the Count Müller when the Grand Duke Alexander is at my feet! the throne of Russia in perspective—my greatest ambition on the point of being gratified! Mad, indeed, I should be to condescend to unite myself with a German count! My father talks about *impossibilities* —what are they? The great Peter married a humbler Catharine than I am; my father's fears make him talk thus. The czar will not, dare not, commit any outrage upon his son, the idol of the people; and me, a woman, he surely —and yet my heart misgives me, in spite of myself. Will the duke be firm? Is his love for me strong enough to make him so?

Enter FŒDORA.

FŒD. His imperial highness, the Grand Duke Alexander.

CATH. Now to the proof.

Enter the GRAND DUKE.

DUKE. Catharine, dearest Catharine!

CATH. To what, my lord, am I to attribute the honour of this visit? Scandal, I fear, will be busy on the subject.

DUKE. You shall set it at defiance, dearest. I have come here from the other end of the palace, through the whole suite of apartments, which are now thronged with people preparing for the ball, on purpose to let them see *where* my devotion lies; but, sweet Catharine! relieve my anxiety on the subject of Count Müller; what answer have you given?

CATH. My lord—I—my father and the chamberlain—

Enter COUNT SOLTIKOF *and* COUNT TERSKEY. *The* GRAND DUKE *goes to the back of the stage.*

COUNT S. Catharine, my love, I have been thinking over our late conversation; and one great point is, that Paul now reigns, you see, and that the grand duke—

ALEXANDER. (*Advancing.*) Will reign after him.

COUNT S. What do I see?

COUNT T. Your excellency here?

COUNT S. Your highness's visit does me too much honour. (*Aside.*) What will the czar say?

GRAND D. I came, count, to pay my respects to your lovely daughter, and to assure you of my high regard for you, and that you may always depend upon my influence and support.

COUNT S. (*Aside.*) Would he were now the czar!

CATH. Your highness would scarcely believe that riches or honour are as dross in the eyes of Count Soltikof, compared with the happiness of his daughter.

GRAND D. What mean you, Catharine?

CATH. Your highness was asking me but now, whether I had consented to become the bride of Count Müller?

GRAND D. Well?

CATH. Think you I would refuse so advantageous an offer?

GRAND D. How, Catharine! For pity's sake tell me—

CATH. That, it being my father's and the czar's express desire, and, feeling that I ought to forget a passion long cherished here, but one calculated to injure the object of it, I do consent to become the bride of Count Müller. (*Anxiously watching the duke.*)

COUNT S. *to* COUNT T. I'm all astonishment!

GRAND D. No, Catharine, no; this can never be! after that sweet confession, never! (*Turning to* COUNT S.) Count Soltikof, sit down and write to the czar; tell him you refuse to give your daughter to Count Müller.

COUNT S. My lord! *I* write to the czar?

GRAND D. Yes, as I shall dictate.

COUNT S. What, your highness!—that I refuse—refuse to comply with the *wishes* of Paul I.? Oh dear! and the ambassador, your highness, from Vienna—think of that!

GRAND D. I do, and will answer him myself; but to save time, suppose *you*, my lord,—(*turning to* COUNT. T.)—be my secretary upon this occasion; I can then dictate both letters at once; it will save time. (COUNT T. *bows, and seats himself at table, prepared to write.*) Now, my lord, will you oblige me? (*To* COUNT S.)

CATH. (*to* COUNT S.) The grand duke will reign *some* day.

(COUNT S. *seats himself at other table.*)

GRAND D. (*to* CATH.) Assured of your love, I'll brave the fury of the czar.

CATH. (*Aside.*) He's mine! he's mine!

GRAND D. Now, my lords, are you ready?

COUNT S. Oh! yes, your highness, if I must—

GRAND D. (*dictating to* COUNT S.) "Sire, there is but one thing in the world that could give me more real pain than displeasing your majesty, and that is, sacrificing the happiness of my child." (*Turning to* COUNT T.) "Your Excellency,—I think it my duty to inform your excellency, that the mission with which you are entrusted from your court to the court of Russia cannot possibly succeed." (COUNT S. *repeating* "of my child.") "Her marriage with Count Müller would make her wretched. I trust your majesty will excuse me when I say I must object to entail misery on my beloved daughter, and to believe that I am most unhappy myself in not being able to comply with your majesty's wishes."

COUNT T. "Cannot possibly succeed."

GRAND D. (*To* COUNT T.) "I have determined not to ally myself with any reigning family. Therefore you see nothing in my refusal, but a determination to choose a bride from among my father's subjects."

COUNT S. "Majesty's wishes."

GRAND D. Now, then, your signature.

COUNT S. (*Aside.*) My signature? I shall tremble so, he'll never be able to make it out.

COUNT T. I have written that your highness—

GRAND D. Then I will sign it. (*Goes to table, and signs.*) And now, my Lord, (*to* COUNT T.) I depute you to deliver this letter to the ambassador.

CATH. (*Interrupting him.*) Will your highness allow *me* to take charge of it? I will be *sure* his excellency has it.

GRAND D. So be it, fair lady; and *I* will take charge of yours to the Czar. (*To* COUNT S.) And now, sweet Catharine, farewell for the present—in the ball-room we shall shortly meet again. (*Exit.*)

COUNT S. Here's a pretty business, truly. We are ruined and undone. What will the Czar say? What will the Czar *do?*

CATH. Oh, never fear, sir. He may alter his mind, and agree to this marriage—who knows?

COUNT S. Alter his mind? Yes, he does do that, nobody can deny. He walks about with order in one hand—counter-order in the other—and dis-order in his head; but, hush! (*Looking about him.*) Great autocrat! magnanimous emperor! Come, count. (*Exeunt the* COUNTS S. *and* T.)

CATH. Delightful! I am the happiest of women! Fœdora! Fœdora!

Enter FŒDORA.

FŒD. Here, my lady.

CATH. Take this letter, and be *sure*—but, no! a thought strikes me. What, if I give it the ambassador myself during the ball, and while I am dancing with the Grand Duke! That will be a triumph indeed—I'll do it. No, Fœdora, never mind the letter.

FŒD. (*Aside.*) She seems in a mighty good temper. I'll venture to speak to her about my poor, dear Ivan. (*Aloud.*) If you please, my lady, do you remember Ivan?

CATH. Ivan, child?—what Ivan?

FŒD. *My* Ivan, my lady! *My* Ivan, that you promised to see this evening.

CATH. Oh, I remember—the handsome sledge-driver, who has turned your brain of late? I am quite curious to see him; besides, I am anxious to find out if he is worthy of you. Is he here, in the palace?

FŒD. He is, my lady.

CATH. Let him come in, then. (*Exit* FŒDORA.) Poor girl, I've a fellow feeling for her! I hope this man will be gentle and kind to her, and that she will be as happy as I shall be!

Enter FŒDORA, *bringing in* IVAN.

FŒD. Come along, dear Ivan. Come, don't be afraid.

IVAN. Afraid? When did you ever see Ivan Daniloff afraid?

CATH. How d'ye do, friend? So, I understand you love Fœdora!

IVAN. Why, as I mean to marry her without a ruble, I should think I do love her!

CATH. But you shall not marry her without a ruble; for I intend to give her a marriage portion myself!

FŒD. Oh, my dear lady, how good you are.

IVAN. Do you think so? Now, I don't!

FŒD. Ivan!

CATH. How's this?—do you object to the gift?

IVAN. Why I love her as she is—poor and honest; besides, I always think it's best not to be under obligations to anybody!

CATH. You've a very independent spirit, friend. Pray how do you mean to live? What have you to enable you to support her?

IVAN. Why, my sledge—my two good horses—my lusty

arms—and a heart brimful of love! What more can any reasonable being want?

CATH. That's all very well, my good man; but, with my patronage, you might one day rise to be coachman to the Grand Duke!

IVAN. I dare say you mean to be very kind; but I wouldn't accept the place!

CATH. How?

IVAN. No; I would not. I'm a poor devil; but I'm a proud one! I was born a slave; but, *now*, I'm a free man! At fifteen I was a soldier, and was lucky enough to save my officer's life. He it was who gave me freedom!—my sledge, my horses. I am free as the air, and happy as the birds. I earn my living honestly, and I don't envy the emperor on his throne. I leave you to judge, then, what the poor sledge-driver would get by the change.

CATH. But suppose your bride should prefer that way of life, of course you—

IVAN. My bride knows better than to have any other will than mine, I hope.

CATH. Indeed! *(Aside.)* What a wretch!

IVAN. Fœdora knows me—she knows that I love her—and she knows my way of behaving myself to females—civil, if they conduct themselves properly; if not, why perhaps a little boisterous.

CATH. *(Aside.)* The man's a perfect brute! *(Aloud.)* Fœdora! Fœdora, I say! I insist on it, you do not marry that man! You may as well have a bear for a husband!

IVAN. What's that you say, ma'am?

CATH. Silence, sir!—it was to *her* I gave my orders, and I will be obeyed.

(IVAN *is about to speak;* FŒDORA *takes him aside.*)

Enter COUNT SOLTIKOF.

COUNT S. Catharine, it is time for you to enter the ball-room, or his august majesty will be there before us.

CATH. I am ready, sir. (*To* FŒDORA.) Let this man leave the palace instantly; and, on no pretence whatever, enter it again! (*Exit* COUNT S. *and* CATHARINE.)

FŒD. Oh, Ivan, Ivan!—how could you talk so to my lady? It was very wrong of you, indeed; and I'm very angry with you, sir.

IVAN. Why, Fœdora, you are as mad as your mistress; I know well enough how to conduct myself; and what's more, madam, I know how to make others conduct themselves also.

FŒD. Indeed, sir! I really believe my lady was quite right; and I *had* better have nothing to say to you. So you may leave me, sir.

IVAN. Not a bit of it! At all events not till I have told you what I've got to say. I don't choose that this great lady should give you a marriage portion. Money given by the rich to the poor often *costs* the poor man too dear. He can't *afford* to accept it. For the little gold they heedlessly throw you, they expect to have a right to do what they like with you—to command, and you must obey! No, no! that wont do for me. I'll neither have her gold nor her place at court! My horses—my poor, dear horses—to think I would forsake them! Never, never!—I couldn't bear it. I can't bear to think of it even. Those animals are dear to me as my life!

FŒD. Very well, sir; if you are so much in love with your horses, you had far better go to them, I think. I'm sure I shall be much more comfortable without you.

IVAN. Halloo, Fœdora! is that the way you are going to talk to me? Oh! yes, I'll go; certainly, I'll go, as fast as I can; (*attempts to go, and returns,*) you sha'n't tell me to *go* twice. I'll go—I'll go.—(*Looks at her all the time; she takes no notice of him.*) Well, this serves me right, for loving the waiting-maid of a great lady; quite right—fool that I was, I ought to have known that you were sure to be as proud, as ambitious, and as headstrong as herself.

FŒD. Just so, sir, and I am happy to hear that you think me in *any* way like the *lovely* Lady Catharine Soltikof. (*Aside.*) I'll go and marry Alexy, directly.

IVAN. Are you? well then, I'll just tell you this—that if your lovely lady, as you call her, was ten times what she is, *I* wouldn't have her for a wife.

FŒD. (*Beginning to cry.*) Go away, do, sir, and don't stand there, teasing me in that manner.

IVAN. (*Aside.*) Crying! oh, I can't stand that though. (*Aloud.*) I did not mean you, Fœdora—I was talking of your mistress. I was only *afraid* you would be like her; but you are a good girl, and I'm sure, in your heart, you are saying, at this moment, "I was wrong, very wrong, to treat poor dear Ivan so unkindly; he is hot and obstinate, perhaps, and says sometimes a few rough things in a rough manner—but then he does not always mean what he says; he is a good fellow, after all, and I am quite sure he would not do, or say, anything to distress me for the world." Isn't it so, Fœdora?—doesn't your heart say that?

FŒD. (*Sobbing.*) Perhaps it does.

IVAN. Well, well—there, say no more about it—we all have our little failings, you know; you among the rest.

FŒD. I know it.

IVAN. Then we must bear with one another, and never, never—(*Aside,*) I don't know what I'm saying; her tears have made a fool of me. (*Aloud.*) Well, Fœdora, as I was saying, I shall make an excellent husband—and if, by chance, you should—(*Aside,*) I must mind what I'm about, though, or I shall set her off again. (*Aloud to her.*) Fœdora, I hate to see a woman cry.

FŒD. Well, then, come and kiss me, do!

IVAN. That I will, with all my heart—and to the bottom of the Neva with all quarrels. (*Kisses her.*)

Enter ALEXY, *hurriedly, at the back, but stops on seeing* IVAN *kissing* FŒDORA.

FŒD. Do you really love me, dear Ivan, as much as you do your horses?

IVAN. Why, upon my life, I think I do. (*Kisses her again.*)

ALEXY. (*Aside.*) Oh! I can't stay any longer. (*Aloud.*) Fœdora! oh, Fœdora!

FŒD. What brings you here, you disagreeable little creature you? didn't I particularly order you not to come near me to-night?

IVAN. Oh, never mind him—poor little fellow. (*They retire up stage.*)

ALEXY. But, Fœdora, leave that horrid—(IVAN *turns sharply round*) that handsome sledge-driving friend of yours, and listen to me for one moment.

FŒD. Well, what have you got to say?

ALEXY. I think, sweet Fœdora! that there is something amiss in the ball-room.

FŒD. Amiss in the ball-room!—nothing the matter with my lady, I hope?

ALEXY. Tender Fœdora! I think there is—for while I was in waiting just now in the ante-room, I heard a great confusion in the ball-room, and very plainly heard the Lady Catharine's name several times.

IVAN. Oh, I dare say she has set her feathers, or some of her finery, on fire, that's all.

ALEXY. Something *is* the matter, I tell you—I hear hurried footsteps through the rooms. (*The doors at the back are thrown open; enter* CATHARINE *and* COUNT SOLTIKOF.)

CATH. Its infamous! shameful! but I'll be revenged.

IVAN. (*Aside to* FŒDORA.) She doesn't seem in a dying condition.

CATH. (*Observing him.*) How's this, Fœdora, that man still here? take him from my sight instantly.

COUNT S. Begone, sir—and all of you. (*Exit* FŒDORA, *followed by* IVAN, *leisurely and sulkily.*)

ALEXY. (*Aside.*) So much for the sledge-driver! (*Exit, closing doors.*)

COUNT S. Oh dear! oh dear! my child, what have you done? What will be the consequence of your imprudence? We shall all have the knout, at least.

CATH. The Czar alone is to blame. Can I help it if the Grand Duke is in love with me?

COUNT S. Perhaps not, my love; but you could help giving the ambassador the letter in the way you did—in the face of the whole court, and while you were dancing with his imperial highness!

CATH. I was bent upon so doing.

COUNT S. I suppose so. Did you see the emperor's look after the ambassador had handed him the letter? Oh, I tremble to think of it! and then, did you hear what he said?

CATH. Did I hear what he said? The words are now burning on my heart—"Count," said he, "conduct your daughter from the ball-room, and I desire she may never appear at court again."—These were his words, sir.

COUNT S. They were, indeed—what a memory she has!

CATH. Dismissed the presence! banished the court! the grand duke, instead of coming forward to protect me, and claim me as his affianced bride before the whole assembly, as he promised me, stood there like a carved image of Despair; and you, sir, my father! to stand by quietly, and hear such indignities heaped upon your daughter! what sort of blood flows through the veins of men that they can bear it! Were *I* a man I wouldn't hear it and live!

COUNT S. Hark! I hear footsteps—as I live, it's the Czar! Its all over with us!

CATH. Let him come, sir, he can't insult me more. (*The doors are thrown open; enter* COUNT TERSKEY, *announcing* "The emperor!")

COUNT S. Oh, I shall die on the spot.

Enter PAUL.

(COUNT S. *throws himself at the emperor's feet.*) Magnanimous autocrat!

PAUL. Rise, my lord, and retire with Count Terskey. Leave me alone with your daughter.

COUNT S. (*Instantly.*) Great Czar! you shall be obeyed.

CATH. (*Getting alarmed.*) Sir—father — you are never going really to leave me with him!

COUNT S. (*To her.*) The mighty Czar particularly wishes it, my love.

PAUL. My lord, you heard what I said. (*The* COUNTS SOLTIKOF *and* TERSKEY *exit.* CATHARINE *is about to follow;*

PAUL *presents her, and leads her back to front of stage.*) Hear me, Madam!—I have hitherto been most indulgent to you, and have shut my eyes to the impropriety of your conduct.

CATH. Of my conduct, Sire!

PAUL. Don't interrupt me, Madam! — I repeat it—the impropriety of your conduct. I can make allowance for the wild ambitious dreams of giddy, silly women; if they don't go too far, I can laugh at them, or punish them, as they deserve.

CATH. Sire, the Grand Duke—

PAUL. I know—has been making love to you. You ought not to have listened to him. Didn't you see the distance which separated you from the inheritor of the crown of Russia?

CATH. I saw nothing but the love of the man—prince or slave—that man was at my feet; the only distance which separated us vanished as I gave him my hand to raise him to my heart.

PAUL. Lady Catharine, you forget yourself. The Duke Alexander is not free to make a choice. The Austrian Ambassador has been insulted at my court; he shall have reparation *(aside)* before his government have time to demand it—in that case I should refuse—(*aloud*) and that reparation shall be your immediate marriage.

CATH. My marriage, Sire!

PAUL. Yes: this very night it shall be solemnized. The Count Müller appears to me, in every respect, a fitting match for you; but I understand you object to marry him. Well, I don't insist upon it—but I *do* insist that you make your election among the court. Point out any one to me

that you like—if they are not rich, I will make them so; if not noble, I will confer honours on them—but let your choice be prompt; Lady Catharine Soltikof, the Czar Paul the First commands you—(*she starts, indignantly*)—the Czar, Lady Catharine, *entreats* it of yo

CATH. (*Aside*). Indeed! ther ll be firm! (*Aloud.*) My answer to the Czar is this:—Pau the First may command his soldiers or his slaves, but the art and hand of Catharine Soltikof, never! She will neithe ved the Count Müller nor any one else the Czar may choc to propose.

PAUL. (*Furiously.*) Do you mean to brave my power?

CATH. You have my answer—nothing shall induce me.

PAUL. We shall see! What, ho! Count Terskey! Count Soltikof!—(*Enter the* COUNTS T. *and* S., *and attendants.*) Count, your daughter is to be married on the instant.

COUNT S. Any wish of your Majesty's is my law.

CATH. (*Aside to* COUNT S.) Father, you consent!—what will the Czar do?

PAUL, (*who has been speaking to* COUNT TERSKEY.) You know the man I mean?

COUNT T. Sire, I do; he was but now outside the palace gates.

PAUL. Fly, sir, and bring him hither instantly.

(*Exit* COUNT T.)

COUNT S. (*To* CATHARINE.) What is going to happen to us? — something dreadful, I'm sure, by the look of the mighty Emperor. Oh, Catharine!—Catharine!

PAUL. Your daughter, Count, is a self-willed lady. You should have taught her better. I regret the whole court is not here to witness her triumph over the Emperor.

Enter COUNT TERSKEY, *bringing in* IVAN.

PAUL. *(To* IVAN.*)* What is your name?

IVAN. Ivan Daniloff.

PAUL. How old are you?

IVAN. About thirty, as near as I can guess.

PAUL. Are you married?

IVAN. No, not yet.

PAUL. Then you'll marry this Lady.

CATH. Heavens! me! Oh! never, never.

IVAN. Not I, indeed—I don't like her.

PAUL. Braved on all sides! *(To* COUNT TERSKEY.*)* See that they are married instantly, and, before noon to-morrow, are on their road to Siberia, or your head shall answer for it.

(General movement; CATHARINE *cries,* "Mercy, mercy," *and falls into her father's arms.* PICTURE.*)*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

Another Apartment in the Palace at Petersburg, elegantly fitted up; doors leading into another room.

A period of five years must be supposed to have elapsed between the first and second Acts.

Enter, from L. H. *door,* FŒDORA.

FŒD. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I'm very tired; for, having been a sort of a fine lady for these last five years nearly, it puts one out sadly to have to bustle about, purposing things for other people nearly five years! Only to think I have been Mrs. Alexy Ratsikoff so long, and that it is five years that my dear lady and poor Ivan have been in exile. When they were sent off, married, I was obliged to give up all thoughts of Ivan, so took pity on Alexy; and it's well I did, for I should have been very wretched, all alone, as it were, in the world. Now I have got somebody to care for me, and mind what I say to them;—but where in the world *is* the man, I wonder. (*Calling.*) Alexy! Alexy! I say, why don't you come when I call, sir?

Enter ALEXY, *slowly.*

ALEXY. I'm coming, impatient Fœdora! as fast as I can. You forget that the Grand Duke is now Emperor of all the Russias, and that my duties are important and heavy.

FŒD. Forget it, indeed!—how can I possibly do that, you stupid little thing, when every man, woman, and child in all

Russia are shouting his name, and praying for blessings on his head?

ALEXY. Have you heard the Ukases he has issued, good Fœdora?

FŒD. Only the one that concerned me most—the recall of all the poor creatures from Siberia.

ALEXY. Well, listen then—"All prisoners of state are set at liberty; all societies and clubs permitted."

FŒD. Well, I don't think there's much good in that, at all events.

ALEXY. (*Coaxingly.*) Don't you, dear Fœdora! Well, then—"Every body may dress as they please, provided they do not violate common decorum."

FŒD. Now *that* I think very proper indeed.

ALEXY. I thought you would, modest Fœdora!—"The importation of books—"

FŒD. Well, well, I can't hear any more about it now; but tell me, Alexy, don't you think I have got every thing in very nice order here, considering I've had so short a time to do it in? The whole suite of apartments the Emperor has given for Lady Catharine and Ivan?

ALEXY. The Lady Catharine!—mistaken, Fœdora! Mr. and Mrs. Ivan Daniloff, you mean.

FŒD. Ah! I can't bear to hear my Lady called by that name, sir. It would have been all very well for me, but for her—oh, dear!

ALEXY. Fœdora!

FŒD. Well, it can't be helped now. So we must all make the best of it, I suppose.

ALEXY. Exactly.

FŒD. It is very kind of the new Emperor, really, not

to forget his old friend, now her poor father's gone, and all; and to take care of her here in the palace.

ALEXY. You think so, do you?—silly Fœdora! There are secret entrances, and private staircases leading to these apartments! Poor Ivan!

FŒD. You scandalous little an—you—what do you mean? Do you think his Maje would do any wrong?

ALEXY. Oh, no, wise Fœdora I forgot—their *Majesties* never do!

FŒD. La! I wonder how my dy and Ivan have got on together all these years—two si fiery tempers!

ALEXY. I wonder they are both alive, I'm sure.

FŒD. Then again, I wonder how they'll look.

ALEXY. You wont have to wonder long, curious Fœdora! for they will, I think, soon arrive.

FŒD. Well, then, you had better be off, for the Emperor will be sure to come here before they arrive, to see that all's in order, so go—(ALEXY *is about to speak*)—and hold your tongue.

ALEXY. (*Aside.*) Imperious Fœdora! (*Exit* R. H.)

FŒD. There, now everything is ready, and they may all come as soon as they like. (*The doors are thrown open at back of stage.*) Oh! here comes his Majesty.

Enter the EMPEROR ALEXANDER *and* COUNT TERSKEY.

CZAR. Is all arranged, Fœdora?

FŒD. All, your Majesty.

(*She curtseys, and retires through back entrance.*)

CZAR. Will it be long think you, my lord, before the arrival of Lady Catharine?

COUNT T. From the arrangements I have made, according to your Majesty's orders, I should think not.

CZAR. 'Tis well!—the day has at length arrived when I can, in some degree, repair the great wrong that poor lady has suffered at my father's hands, and which, I regret to feel, I was the cause of.

COUNT T. Bad as it has been, Sire, the lady *might* have felt it more severely, for Ivan Daniloff, though rough in speech and uncouth in manner, possesses a heart noble and kind. I hear from the governor, and one lately returned from exile, that he has never presumed upon his situation; but has treated the Lady Catharine with the devotion of a slave.

CZAR. Indeed!—I should scarcely have expected such conduct, from the sort of person I have heard Ivan Daniloff described. He must be rewarded, and the Lady Catharine separated from him without delay. (*Shouts without, enter* ALEXY, *hastily.*) What mean those shouts?

ALEXY. Oh! your Majesty, the arrival of the Lady Catharine and Ivan Daniloff.

CZAR. Count Terskey, conduct the Lady Catharine hither. (COUNT *bows, and exit.*) Thus to meet, it is indeed a trial!

Re-enter COUNT TERSKEY, *conducting* LADY CATHARINE *and* IVAN, *followed by* FŒDORA *and attendants;* CATHARINE *throws herself at the feet of the* CZAR; *he raises her.*

CZAR. Welcome, dear Lady!—welcome back to Petersburg! To you, Ivan Daniloff, we express our thanks—nay, our gratitude, for the way in which we hear that you have conducted yourself during your exile.

IVAN. (*Aside to* CATHARINE.) Who is this young officer?

CATH. (*To* IVAN.) The Czar!—the Czar!

IVAN. The Czar!—the good Emperor Alexander! (*Attempts to fall at his feet; the* CZAR *prevents him.*) Pardon! how could I know it was you?—I never set eyes on your Majesty before.

CZAR. There's no harm done, honest Ivan. Lady Catharine, I trust you will do me the justice to believe, that the moment I had it in my power, my first thought—my greatest happiness—was to recall you from your miserable situation; and nothing shall be wanting for the future to make you forget the sufferings you have so long endured.

IVAN. Sufferings, indeed, they have been to me; the bitterest part was seeing *her* agony. If I could have borne it all myself, I should have been a happy man.

CZAR. (*To* CATHARINE.) But how is this? The Lady Catharine does not seem to partake in the general joy her return has caused.

CATH. Sire, forgive me if I do not appear to appreciate all your kindness; I would express my gratitude, but that I am choked with contending feelings; but, believe me——

CZAR. Enough, dear Lady, you require repose—we will leave you. In the meantime, retire to your apartment, and court the tranquillity you stand so much in need of.

(*Exit the* CZAR, *followed by* COUNT T., ALEXY, *and Attendants.*)

CATH. Fœdora!—Oh, Fœdora!

(*Bursts into tears, and throws herself into* FŒDORA'S *arms.*)

FŒD. This way, dear lady!

*(Conducts her into room, left hand—*IVAN *is about to follow, but checks himself, and stands looking mournfully after her.)*

IVAN. How like a dream is this! (*Sits down, and looks about him.*) Here am I in a palace—I the inmate of a palace!—A few years back, and I was Ivan the sledge-driver—the happy cheerful Ivan! What am I now? In name the same, but all—all else is changed! What had *I* done to the czar to make him take me from my happy way of life, marry me to a great lady, and send me to Siberia? Then, I no sooner got used to that—no sooner got accustomed to serve—to guard—to—to love the Lady Catharine, than the new emperor sends for me back, puts me into fine clothes, and into a miserable palace! (*Rises.*) And what could *she* have done to deserve such heavy punishment? Poor lady! it has been sad indeed for her! It made my heart bleed to see her lofty spirit brought so low—to see her toil and toil, and then throw herself down and weep! And what could *I* do to comfort her? Why nothing, but devote myself to her!—I did it; I have been her servant—her slave! I have laboured for her by day—I have guarded her hovel by night—I have been something less to her than a brother, something more to her than a dog! She is now meek and gentle as a lamb, and I have heard her, more than once, bless me, and call me *dear* Ivan!

Enter COUNT TERSKEY.

COUNT. Ivan! (IVAN *is walking about the stage abstractedly.*) Ivan Daniloff!

IVAN. Eh! did you speak?

COUNT. I am deputed by his majesty, the emperor, to make known to you his wishes upon one particular subject.

IVAN. To me! But why should I be at all surprised, for emperors seem to have little else to do than trouble themselves with my affairs?

COUNT. The czar desires me ıssure you that he thinks your conduct towards the I Catharine, during your sojourn with her in Siberia, as ıle and generous in the highest degree.

IVAN. I acted as an honest should!

COUNT. For which his maje: ; most anxious to reward you.

IVAN. Reward me! Why what's he going to do with me now?

COUNT. He would relieve you from this most unequal and distressing marriage.

IVAN. What do you mean, my lord?

COUNT. That the marriage shall be annulled without delay — that the Lady Catharine shall be immediately divorced.

IVAN. (*Clasping his hands in agony.*) Divorced! my lord? Divorced, did you say?

COUNT. I did; that is the first step towards insuring the Lady Catharine's happiness.

IVAN. (*Recov.ring himself.*) It is—it is indeed!—poor ıady. A divorce! I never thought of that, fool that I was! —and yet it was sure to happen as soon as they sent for us back to Petersburg. Yes! it must be so!

COUNT. Then you will be free and happy again.

IVAN. Yes—yes—very! (*Wiping his eyes with the back of his hand.*)

COUNT. And the emperor intends to bestow upon you a pension of ten thousand rubles.

IVAN. Oh! no—no! No pension for me! I'll have nothing to remind me of courts and emperors! I'll go back to the way of life I was taken from; but my joyous happy heart is gone—gone, never to return!

COUNT. But the czar will not—cannot—allow you to return to your humble condition.

IVAN. What has the czar to do with that?

COUNT. Having, although nominally, married one of the ladies of the court, his majesty *could* not allow you to exercise so mean a calling.

IVAN. And he will prevent it, will he? What's to become of me then? I'll turn soldier! The emperor wont prevent my going to the wars, and getting, as I hope I shall, a bullet through my heart, will he? Will the great czar hinder me from doing that, think you?

COUNT. I hope his majesty will permit you to join the troops. But I would advise you, my good friend, to reflect upon the liberal offer of the czar; think how comfortable ten thousand rubles yearly will enable you to make yourself.

IVAN. No, my lord, no! I am determined I will *not* accept such a pension!

COUNT. I'm sorry for it. I must now to my noble master, and inform him of your determination. Farewell, friend!

(*Exit* COUNT. IVAN *stands stupified, and mutters,* "A divorce, a divorce!" *Enter* FŒDORA, *from left hand door.*—IVAN, *without seeing her, sits down, with his back towards her.*)

FŒD. Ivan, Ivan!

IVAN. (*Rising.*) Ah! Fœdora, is it you?

FŒD. Yes, it is indeed me; and I'm so glad of what I've just heard—that you and my lady are going to be divorced.

IVAN. (*Furiously.*) Who told you so?

FŒD. Lud a mercy! nobody l me—I overheard it; I was going to come out of my l s room just now, when I heard you and Count Terskey ıg together, so I thought it would be rude to interru u—and so I thought it was—

IVAN. Better to stop and liste

FŒD. Well, Ivan, I didn't do ı n purpose, I'm sure, but I declare I *was* glad to hear it; for it is very dreadful to be obliged to live all one's life with a person that one doesn't love, isn't it, Ivan?

IVAN. "That one doesn't love!" Yes, yes, Fœdora, you are right, quite right; the divorce—the divorce *is* the proper thing!

FŒD. Certainly. Ah! it's a great pity though, a great pity indeed, that I should happen to be married.

IVAN. (*Answers without attending to her.*) Oh, you are married, are you?

FŒD. (*Aside.*) How cool he is about it. (*Aloud.*) Yes, Ivan, I am marrried to Alexy Ratsikoff. You remember Alexy?

IVAN. Alexy! Yes, I remember.

FŒD. Oh! he's a good little fellow enough—he does everything in the world I tell him—never contradicts me; and yet I can't help regretting—

IVAN. Well, well, I'll think no more about it.

FŒD. About what? About what? Ivan, what do you mean?

IVAN. The divorce, Fœdora, the divorce! it's a clever invention, truly.

FŒD. So it is, Ivan.

IVAN. The good, kind czar—to put an end to all my troubles by this divorce!

Enter ALEXY.

ALEXY. Fœdora, imprudent Fœdora! what are you doing here?

FŒD. Pray what's that to you, sir? It's no business of yours.

ALEXY. Oh! quite different, disrespectful Fœdora! it *is* my business! (*Aside.*) I wish he had stayed in Siberia.

IVAN. Alexy Ratsikoff, you are married to Fœdora?

ALEXY. Ivan Daniloff, I am! what then?

IVAN. Mind you make her happy!

FŒD. (*Aside.*) Make her happy! Oh, then he doesn't care any more about me, that's pretty clear.

ALEXY. I will if I can, respectable sledge-driver!

IVAN. Come here. (*Draws them both to him.*) The Czar has offered me a pension—I have refused it! Now, do you go to Count Terskey, and tell him, I accept it for you and Fœdora.

ALEXY. Thanks, most generous Ivan!

IVAN. And will you sometimes think of poor Ivan? For there will be no one else in the world to bestow a thought or a care upon the wretched outcast!

ALEXY. Oh, noble-minded Ivan, that we will; but, come, weeping Fœdora! let us go and find the Count, and inform him of our good fortune.

IVAN. Stay, one moment. Answer me one question, and

with truth—is your mistress—is the lady Catharine to be the bride of some great lord about the court?

FŒD. I should think not.

ALEXY. (*With meaning.*) And *I* should think not.

FŒD. Oh, she refused so m of the nobles about the court before she went to Sibe

ALEXY. Was *sent* to Sil

FŒD. Well, well—it's all th e. She was too much in love, then, to marry any of th... but, to be sure, it may make a difference now he is ma d himself.

IVAN. He?—who?

FŒD. The one she was in love with!

IVAN. And who was it? What was his name?

FŒD. (*Looking about her, then speaking in* IVAN'S *ear.*) The Czar.

IVAN. The Czar?—the Emperor Alexander?

FŒD. Why, didn't you know? La! that was the reason she was sent to Siberia by his father.

ALEXY. Yes; and that's the reason the son sends for her back again!

IVAN. Oh, I see it all!—blind fool that I've been! The emperor's tenderness to her—his wish to pension me off—the divorce!—all, all confirm it. Ha, ha, ha! (*Laughs convulsively.*) Laugh, laugh at your own folly, idiot! idiot! Ha, ha, ha! (*Bursts into tears, and throws himself into chair.*)

FŒD. Poor Ivan—he's crying!

IVAN. (*Starting up.*) No, no! you mistake—I'm laughing! I am happy—quite happy! And they offered me gold to renounce her; and for what?—for her to become the *mistress* of the Czar! Horrible!—horrible!

FŒD. He'll go mad, Alexy! Ah! my lady is coming.

IVAN. Is she? Go—go, then, and let me say one word to her for the last time! (*Exit* ALEXY *and* FŒDORA.)

Enter CATHARINE.

CATH. (*Going kindly to him.*) Ivan, what is the matter?

IVAN. I am miserable!—I am mad!

CATH. Why is this? What has happened? Who has offended you?

IVAN. Everybody—you!

CATH. Me, Ivan?—what have I done?

IVAN. Enough to make me hate you! and so, to make me loathe all humankind!

CATH. I do not understand you, sir! This language is somewhat strange. You must, in truth, be mad, to talk thus to me—me, to whom you have been hitherto kind and tender as an anxious parent over a drooping child! Why is this change?

IVAN. I have found out the cause of your banishment to Siberia! You loved the Grand Duke, Alexander?

CATH. I did.

IVAN. You love the *Emperor* Alexander, and are about to become his mistress!

CATH. His mistress, Ivan?

IVAN. Yes; you will be the mistress of an emperor! Think, what glory—what honours will be the consequence! You will be the people's idol—you will crown yourself with infamy, and they will fall down and worship you as a queen—you will smile, and be happy. But a time will come when you will cease to smile, and your happiness will vanish as a dream! You will be left, abandoned, by all—you will weep! Yes, lady, you will weep and weep, and have no friend to

soothe your wretchedness—no arm to protect you from the sneers and frowns of the world.

CATH. Ivan! Ivan! I insist—I will not be talked to in this manner.

IVAN. Ah, ah!—you *will* not?

CATH. I will not!

IVAN. Indeed! You forget, madam, that I am your husband—that you are the wife of Ivan Daniloff!

CATH. Oh, Ivan, have pity on me!

IVAN. Now I feel the pleasure there is in command. I'll go to the Czar, and tell him he may send me back to Siberia—he may put me in prison—he may kill me; but separate us—never! *(Is going.)*

CATH. Ivan, you shall not go! Ivan, dear Ivan, hear me!

IVAN. Ah! did I hear right? "*Dear* Ivan?" my head turns round—I know not what I say—what I do; but one thing—one thing I am quite certain of—I will not consent to this—divorce!

CATH. Divorce—divorce! What divorce?

IVAN. The divorce that is to separate you from me! But it shall not be—no, no! My brain—my heart's on fire; but I'll prevent it. You shall not be the mistress of the Czar!

(*Rushes out.*)

CATH. What can he mean? What dreadful deed is he about to do?—he will rouse the anger of the Czar, and then perhaps, he will be sent back to Siberia, and I shall lose him—my best, I may almost say my only, friend. Why—why was this man not born my equal? Oh, ambition! to what hast thou not reduced thy votary! My trials have been indeed severe; but they have been whole-

some; and when all are execrating the name of Paul the First, I alone—the once proud, imperious, ambitious Catharine Soltikof, will raise her now humbled voice to vindicate his memory, for he has saved her from herself! And Alexander!—why has he sent for me to the palace? Ah me!—too much I fear it is as Ivan says—he is going to force me into a divorce, as his father did into the marriage, and then, as a reward for all my sufferings, he will condescend to bestow on me the title of his mistress!

(*Doors thrown open at the back. Enter* COUNT TERSKEY, *announcing* "the Emperor!"—*then retires.*)

Now for the crisis! His mistress!—never! never!

Enter the EMPEROR.

CZAR. In what have I offended, that the Lady Catharine will not condescend to look upon me?

CATH. (*Without looking at him.*) Sire, I know not to what cause to attribute this visit.

CZAR. To the same cause that ever actuated my conduct towards you. In spite of our long separation, and of the circumstances which have occurred during that separation, my feelings towards you, dear lady, are still the same.

CATH. Sire! those very circumstances, I should have thought, would have deterred the noble Alexander from offering insult to the humbled, suffering being before him!

Enter IVAN *at* R. H. D.; *stands aside.*

IVAN. The Czar!—I tremble with rage!

CZAR. Catharine, believe me that I value my crown but for your sake—that my greatest happiness would consist in contributing to yours. Nay, nay—turn not from me, but hear me. The Emperor Alexander will address nothing to

the Lady Catharine, that he need blush to utter, or that will offend her delicacy to listen to! (CATHARINE *turns quickly round, astonished at his manner.*) Catharine! the unjust persecutions you have undergone have not lowered you in my esteem — something must be done to repair this heavy wrong. Your noble [illegible]h alone requires that this most unfortunate marriage be immediately set aside; these apartments I have selected [illegible] you — here I had hoped you would live happily and comfortably—sanctioned by the presence of the empress and the ladies of the court; and for myself, whether emperor or slave, my affection and profound respect (*bowing*) will ever be due to the Lady Catharine Soltikof.

(IVAN *rushes forward; but is overpowered by his feelings, and is not able to speak.*)

CATH. Ivan! Ivan! (*He falls at the* EMPEROR'S *feet.*)

IVAN. Forgive me, sire—forgive me!

CZAR. Forgive you, friend?—for what?

IVAN. For the anger—rage—hatred I bore against you but now; I have been searching, like a madman, everywhere for you, to tell you that I thought you a villain! You may well start; but my senses were gone—I was mad—mad. I see it all now; your conduct towards that injured lady is great—is noble! and you need not blush, emperor as you are, to hear that from the mouth of the poor sledge-driver! I am ready this instant to sign the divorce!

CZAR. Noble fellow!

CATH. Dear—dear Ivan!

IVAN. (*Advancing to* CATHARINE.) Lady, I go! (*Falls at her feet, takes her hand, and kisses it fervently.*) Your slave is going away to die. Speak—oh! speak—one word of

comfort to him! for, in his dying moments, the recollection of it will soothe his passage hence!

CATH. God bless you, Ivan; for you have, indeed, been a solace and a comfort to me in my hour of need—

IVAN. (*Starting up.*) You heard her!—she blessed me, and said I'd been a comfort to her!—Now then for the divorce!

CATH. Stay, Ivan! (*Turning to the* CZAR.) Sire, I do not consent to this separation!

CZAR. Madam!

IVAN. Did I hear right?

CATH. If your majesty thinks you owe me some reparation for the miseries I have endured, what think you I am indebted to that man—who, having offended no one, has been made to suffer for the sins of others? For more than four weary years, he has been my constant—my devoted slave, and now he sacrifices all for me—aye, even his love? (IVAN *starts.*) and can I—ought I—now to abandon him? Never! never! Ivan—there is my hand! take it—and I glory more in that, than in wearing the crown I so much coveted.

CZAR. Lady Catherine—

IVAN. Am I awake? Oh, in mercy tell me! your majesty—Lady Catherine! but no, no; it cannot be!—too well I know my own unworthiness—I dare not lift my eyes so high! the poor sledge-driver, Ivan, is no husband for one of Russia's noble daughters.

The CZAR (*who has been talking to* CATHARINE *during this, joins their hands.*) The Lady Catharine confirms your happiness!

Enter COUNT TERSKEY, *followed by* FŒDORA, ALEXY, *and* ATTENDANTS.

COUNT T. Sire! all is ready for the signatures.

CZAR. We need it not, my Lord, for in Ivan Daniloff, you behold the chosen husband [illegible]he Lady Catharine Soltikof!

FŒD. Lucky Ivan!

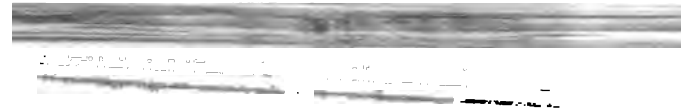
ALEXY. Extraordinary Lad[illegible]atharine!

CZAR. Approach, friend Ivan! We will make this union seem more fitting in the eyes of the world. We invest you with the orders of Saint Waldimer and Saint Michael. (*To* TERSKEY.) Cause this, my Lord, to be made known throughout the city, and we trust that all, with one accord, will exclaim—Health and long life to the "*Sledge Driver.*"

THE END.

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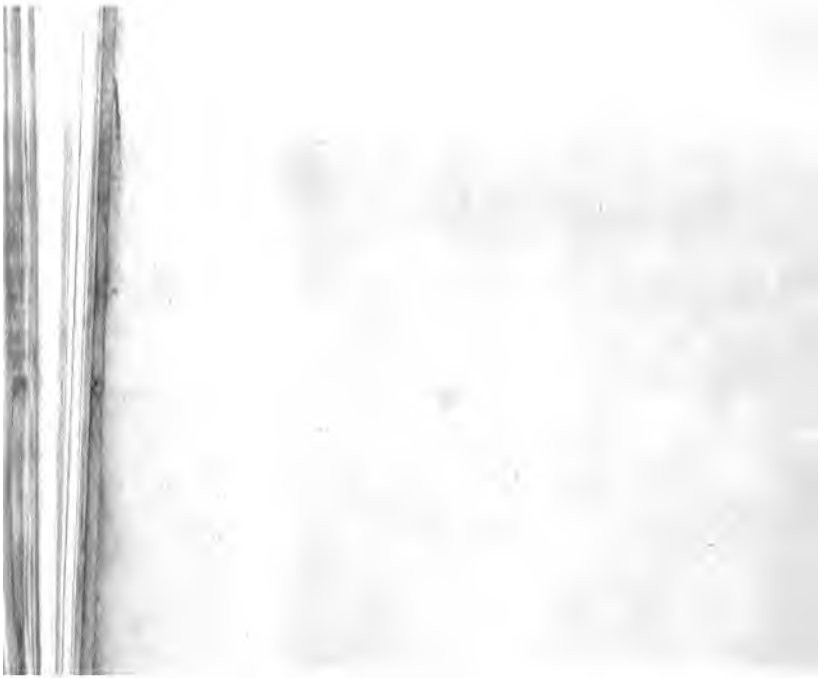
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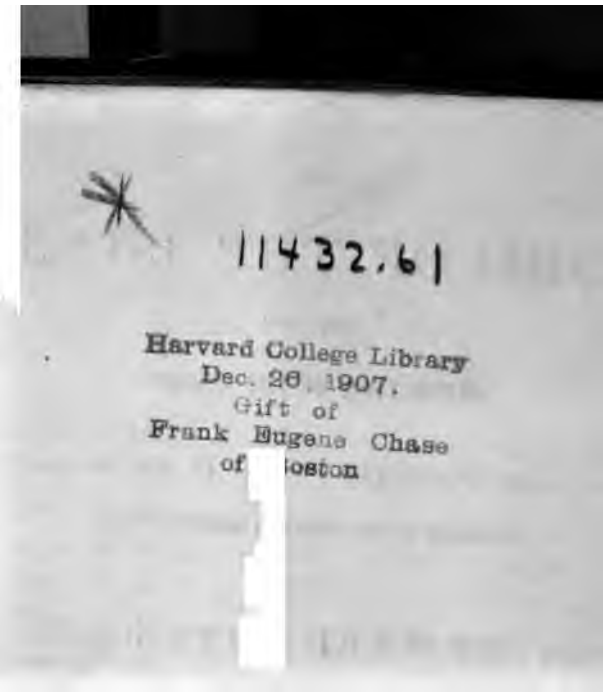
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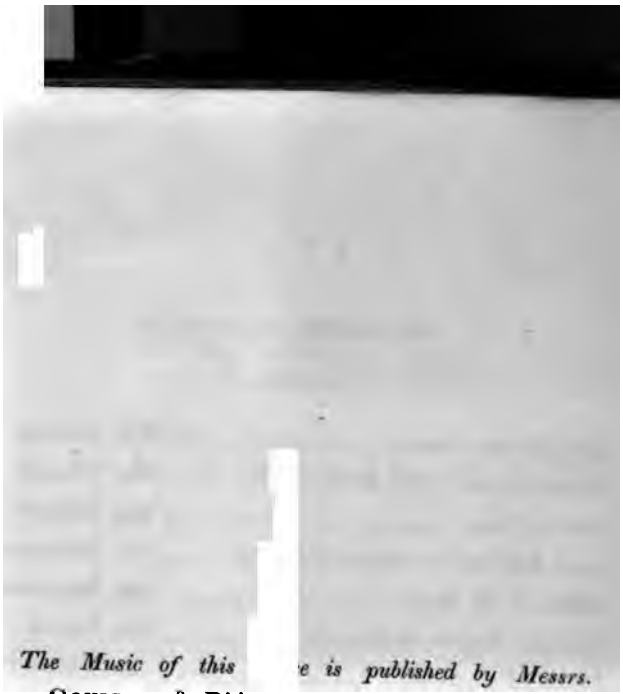
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The Court of Artornish Castle; on the L.H. *ancient battlements; a stone balcony, and folding-doors beneath it;* R.H. *a portcullis, with steps to ascend over rampart, running across the stage. The sea, and distant rocks, at sunset.*

Enter CATHLEEN *through Castle gates,* L. H., *and* CHORUS *of* VASSALS, *who range down,* L.H., *looking off* U.E.R.H.

Warder! Warder! from thy tower
Look forth while the sunlight smiles;
Is there never a bark on the waters below,
Nor a distant speck on the flood to shew
Where he merrily sails to his lady's bow'r,
Brave Ronald! the Lord of the Isles?

WARDER, *on battlement, at back,* L.H.

Far north, far south, in vain I gaze;
All there is wave and sky,
Save where the flitting sea-mew plays,
And mocks my wand'ring eye.

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DUG. Cathleen, when that cow died, I shed abundance of tears. I was ill once, and she was a mother to me.

CATH. In good truth, I may say I was educated beneath the poor thing, till I left our cottage, and went to live with my lady of Lorn; but that wasn't till you turned false-hearted, and came here to the castle of Artornish as Seneschal!

DUG. Well, well—forget old offences, and pardon a contrite lover. Chance, which brings your lady here, to marry my master, has also brought you, her attendant, to marry your humble servant, if you please.

CATH. Are you serious?

DUG. Serious? Am I not a soldier? See, here's the ring! (*Producing it.*)

SONG—DUGAL.

I dreamt last night of our early days,
  Ere I sigh'd for sword and feather,
When we danc'd on the heath, in the moon's pale rays,
  Hand in hand together;
I thought you gave me again that kiss,
  More sweet than the perfume of spring,
While I pressed on your finger love's pure golden pledge—
  The bridal ring! the bridal ring!

I dreamt I heard, then, the trumpet sound,
  And at once was forced to sever;
That I fell on the heath with my last death wound,
  Lost to thee for ever!
I thought that you gave me again that kiss,
  Empearl'd like a flower in spring;
'Neath its warmth I awoke, on this dear hand to press
  The bridal ring! the bridal ring!

(*Placing it on her finger.*)

CATH. Do you really suppose that your master, the Lord of the Isles, will—*(looking round)*—will unite himself to my mistress, the lady Edith? That she loves *him*, I doubt not. Does *he* love *her?*

DUG. Isn't she young, beautiful, amiable? Nay—isn't the priest already in the castle to perform the bridal ceremony? Whom the deuce should he marry, or love either, if not the lady Edith?

CATH. Why, people do say, that, after a certain tournament, where Ronald first beheld lady Isabel, he secretly made her an offer of his hand, already pledged to lady Edith; and, were it not for an apprehension of incurring the vengeance of the Lord of Lorn, who you know is the sworn foe of the exiled Bruce—the guardian of Isabel—

(Rain.)

DUG. Bless me, it begins to rain—the waves, too, are quite agitated.

CATH. And the sky darkens as though we should have a storm.

DUG. Ha, ha!—we were speaking of matrimony!

CATH. You laugh; but this is a very bad omen. See! what is it the warder is gazing at so earnestly?

(Thunder; the WARDER *is looking from the battlements.)*

TRIO—DUGAL, CATHLEEN, *and* WARDER.

A little bark, I see it now,
Whose trembling sides huge waves are lashing.
A female form sits on that prow;
Around her head the storm is flashing—
The sail is torn—the cordage flies—
In vain his might the steersman plies;

Low in the flood the galley lies!
Help!
Listen to the sufferer's cries.

(*Thunder.*)

Enter VASSALS *through Castle gates*, L.H.; CHORUS, *ranged down* L.H.

Ah! hapless vessel—hapless maid!
Heaven of pity, grant thine aid!
See! see! again—
Again she skims the waves!
Yes, pitying heaven notes and saves!

(*Storm subsides, and scene grows lighter.*)

Enter BRUCE, U.E.R.H., *with* ISABEL, *insensible in his arms, followed by* EDWARD; *a gothic chair is brought for* ISABEL, R.C.

EDW. Strangers we are—forlorn, and tempest driven. Good people, grant us shelter and protection.

DUG. What the Lord of the Isles never yet denied, you will not ask in vain. (*Enters castle.*)

BRUCE. My fair—my gentle Isabel, the danger exists no longer. Speak to me—speak Isabel!

CATH. Isabel! The very name!

ISA. Alas! where are we?

BRUCE. Safe, as I take it, in the Castle of—

CATH. Artonish!

BRUCE. Its chief?

CATH. The Lord of the Isles!

ISA. (*Rising.*) Oh, heavens! He now ranks among the number of your foes—is the friend of your bitterest enemy, the Lord of Lorn!

BRUCE. That Providence, at whose bidding the resistless storm tossed our frail bark upon a stranger's land, can save us as easily from our sternest foes as from yon overwhelming billows! Fear thou nothing! (*Looking around.*) Ah! well I know this ancient pile—yon flood—those mountains. In my boyhood, often have I clambered to yon isthmus top, and scattered the waves beneath with wild heath flowers—flowers, emblems of my own happiness—happiness as untimely plucked, and strewn as reckless on the impetuous tide of deep adversity! (*Sinks into chair, in centre.*)

ISA. My Lord, this burst of grief! Ah!—the spell which ever wakens him from these deep abstractions!

(EDWARD, *on* R.H., *takes a small harp from the folds of his mantle, which he touches, while* ISABEL *sings.*)

AIR AND CHORUS—ISABEL.

Rest thee—rest thee, warrior chief!
Be not thou affliction's slave.
Hope inspires thine every grief;
Heaven will ne'er desert the brave!
Noble hearts must nobly suffer!
As yon rock, indignant, strong,
Marks the reeds beneath it crouching
To each blast that sweeps along.
Rest thee—rest thee, warrior chief!
Sink not to despair a slave!
Hope sustain thee—zeal maintain thee;
Heaven will ne'er desert the brave.

BRUCE. (*Rises, chair taken back by* VASSALS.) You pity me, Isabel! You weep for me as the angels weep the fallen! Know ye not that there are moments of at once bitter and sweet remembrance—wherein sorrow is akin to joy—when

early thoughts crowd back upon the mind, like touching melody, soothing the heart it wounds? But I'll forget all this, —forget me now a wronged and banished man; and, while I've strength to grasp this true claymore—while in this breast the pulse of life shall beat—think only that with this I'll dig my grave, or with it win again the home—the pride —the glory of my race!

EDW. Ah, noble Brucè!—restrain this fruitless rage! Sheathed be your weapon, and [redacted] woes dissembled! Here, in the tiger's den! beware his fangs—remember your disguise; the vassal comes.

BRUCE. Young soldier, I am advised.

Enter DUGAL, *castle gates.*

Now, Seneschal, says your chief?

DUG. Welcome to the stranger ever.

DUET AND CHORUS—CATHLEEN *and* VASSALS.

Welcome, welcome to the stranger!
Bid each doubt and tumult cease;
Free from trouble—free from danger,
Enter here and be at peace.
Here no billows rise to harm thee,
Here soft music waits to charm thee;
Wine is brimming for thy lip,
Stranger, stranger, come and sip.
Bid each doubt, each sorrow cease;
Enter here and be at peace.

(*Exeunt* DUGAL, *bowing* BRUCE, EDWARD, *and* ISABEL *into castle*, L.H., VASSALS *following.*)

SCENE II.

An Oak Chamber in the Castle.

Enter EDITH, P.S., *followed by* CATHLEEN.

EDITH. Strangers!

CATH. Very noble-looking, fine men, I assure your ladyship; so dignified, so courteous to me. Then, the lady with them, whom they called Isabel, she—

EDITH. Isabel?

CATH. Oh, it can't be that Isabel whom your ladyship is so alarmed about!

EDITH. Alarmed, Cathleen?

CATH. That is—I didn't mean to say alarmed—I meant she whose beauty is so alarming—no, that renders bad, worse; you—my lady—I—suppose I just run and inquire of Dugal what Isabel he thinks this is?

EDITH. Stay, Cathleen. (*Aside.*) She is far distant—far from these walls removed—the companion of an exile! Yet Ronald, alas! how long hath he returned from the chase? still he comes not to greet his, perhaps, too willing bride; and, within this very hour, his hand conducts me to the altar!

CATH. Sweet lady, compose yourself. Men are the oddest creatures in the world—they only want a little judicious management, and they'll prove as pliant as your wedding ring, which you slip on or off at your pleasure. But, ah! the times are so sadly changed of late, that I almost begin to fear the days of joy are gone!

SONG—CATHLEEN.

No more through Carrick's tangled wood
  Resounds the wild harp's strain;
Its heath bells now are dyed in blood,
  Its broad boughs shade the slain;
Those sylvan glens, where lover's lip
  Breathed music's purest tone,
Now thrill with sighs which sadly talk
  The days of joy are gone!

Now, where the ring-dove built her nest,
  Is heard the vulture's cry;
While, on those banks of sunny rest
  The brave—how cold they lie!
Oh, fame! while thus thy smiles exact
  The tear—the orphan's groan—
E'en through thy brightest blaze must beam,
  The days of joy are gone!

EDITH. I am resolved to deserve Ronald's gratitude by refusing his hand!

CATH. Oh, pray, my lady, don't do anything so rash! My Lord of Lorn, your ladyship's brother, would be in such a dreadful fury, that—

EDITH. Let him! His look is not the thunder to strike me dead; were it so, I might even court his displeasure!

CATH. Mercy on us, here he comes! If your ladyship adhere to your resolution, 'tis odds but we shall have steel flourishing—aye, and blood flowing! He looks displeased already. I'll go and ask Dugal what's the matter.

(*Exit*, P.S., *as* LORN *enters*, P.S.)

LORN. Edith!—whence this delay? Know you not the banquet waits? The bride's absence now, is ill timed!

EDITH. But, Ronald!—hath he sought me?

LORN. I know not—heed not! A blunt warrior cares little for these vain preliminaries! Enough! Ronald has sworn to become your husband! At the altar, with my sister's hand in mine, I shall remember only that I demand the fulfilment of an ancient compact! Let him, then, comply, or absolve it in his blood! Be guarded, as thou lov'st him, Edith—thy suspicions breathed elsewhere, a hundred of our clansmen's daggers were drawn forth to strike the traitor dead!

EDITH. Ronald a traitor? Have I said it?

LORN. If he looks coldly on my Edith's love—looks he not coldly on Edith's brother? An enemy to Lorn is Bruce's friend! (*Draws dagger.*) Speak that, and bid him die!

EDITH. This savage haste—stay, hear me!

LORN. His life or death but waits on thy decision! Say thou he's false, he dies!

SONG—LORN.

You deem me too stern, my dear sister;
That look seems my harshness to blame;
But better to perish, dear sister,
Than live for one moment of shame!
Then shew me the heart of the traitor
Dares to draw forth one tear from that eye,—
Like lightning my rage shall o'ertake him,
As the shaft strikes the eagle on high!
You deem, &c.

Remember the oath we have taken,
The cause we both boldly preferr'd;
Suspicion ought ne'er to awaken
One doubt of his truth or his word.
Yes, shew me the heart of a traitor,
Up yon steep to 'mid air though he fly,
Like lightning my rage shall o'ertake him,
As the shaft strikes the eagle on high.
You deem, &c.

(*Exeunt*, L.H.)

SCENE III.

A Banquet Hall; large stained windows; low square folding doors under the window; a magnificent banquet, illuminated.

Guards, banners, &c. BRUCE- DWARD, *and* ISABEL *are seated at the end of the nearest audience.*

MU

RONALD *and* EDITH *seated a head of the table;* LORN *sits* R. H., *opposite* BRUCE, L. R. H. DUGAL, CATHLEEN, *and* VASSALS; ISABEL *conce her features in her veil; Guards at each side; all discov d.*

CHORUS.

Health! health! to the bonny bride!
Clad in beauty's beamy smiles;
Hail! hail! to Scotland's pride!
The daughter of the isles!
Health to the bride,
Scotland's pride,
Health! health! to the bride!

RON. Good welcome to the stranger who comes, heaven-sent, unbidden to our feast. Lady, and Knights unknown, the Children of the Isles in me pronounce your welcome!

(*Comes forward.*)

SONG.

Lift the cup from earth to heaven,
Halo it with sunny smiles;
Breathe around a patriot's prayer—
Freedom, freedom to the Isles!
'Tis the hour when Scottish valour
Bursts the cloud of freedom's night;
In each hand her sword is gleaming,
On each hill her beacon light!

CHORUS—Lift, &c. &c.

Let no sigh from lip unholy
Here a traitor thought impart;
Drain the cup as we for glory
Ev'ry man would drain his heart!
Lift on high our native banner,
Gild the woof with loyal smiles,
Breathe around us patriot pray'rs—
Freedom, freedom to the Isles!

CHORUS—Lift, &c. &c.

(*He retires to the table.*)

BRUCE. Wandering knights we are, with travel tired, sea-tossed and hither tempest-driven, seeking our homes; with grateful hearts we bless your courtesy, Lord of the Isles, and will, at morning's light, with your good leave, depart us hence.

LORN. (*Aside.*) That voice! that air! I cannot be deceived. Welcome to *him!*—yes, such welcome as vultures give to lambs, when they welcome them to their gory nests. (*To* BRUCE.) Strangers, take greeting from the Lord of Lorn.

BRUCE. (*With dignity.*) Such blessings as the Lord of Lorn confers, such blessings we return.

LORN. Can Ronald know of this? If I thought that, (*touching his dagger,*) I'd pluck the vizor from the traitor's face, wear it who may. (*To* BRUCE.) Tell me, wanderers, in your late voyage, heard ye aught of Bruce, that exiled man, driven by our vengeful arms to seek a refuge on the shores of Ulster; the assassin Bruce, writhing beneath the church's malediction, for murder done upon our kinsman's head?

BRUCE. (*Fiercely.*) Of assassins heard we nothing, Lord of Lorn; but if, of princely Bruce thou'dst know, I warn thee

he hath sworn, ere thrice three days shall come and go, his banner shall be fanned by Scottish winds, and wave again upon his kindred walls, despite the usurping power that drove it thence. (*Rise.*)

LORN. These words, and uttered here,—it must be. Tell me, vaunting champion, of this recreant Bruce.

BRUCE. (*With emotion.*) Recreant say'st thou?

LORN. (*With irony.*) Well, *princely* was thy phrase, was it not? (*Bows.* BRUCE *sits.*)

RON. Brother of Lorn, I charge thee, pursue these rash inquiries no further, which ill, methinks, accord with hospitality; better it were to chase the night with music, than with strifes that flow from these unhappy feuds.

LORN. (*Aside.*) Ah, traitor! (*To* RONALD.) Well thou say'st; I claim to chuse the song, myself to play the minstrel. Come hither, Harper,—thou of Lorn I mean,—thou knowest the strain. (*Whispers.*) Obey!

(*Seats himself. The harper, on* R. H., *bows.*)

GRAND CHORUS.

LORN, &c. (*with spirit.*)

Bold as the eagle, bright as the morn,
Up with the banner, the banner of Lorn!
Down with the Bruce,
Shame to the truce—
Shame to all truce with the banner of Lorn!
The banner! the banner!
The banner of Lorn!
In despite of the foe,
Over mountain and moor,
The children of Lorn
Still shall wield the claymore.

Up with the banner!
Up with the banner!
Up with the banner!
Draw, draw the claymore.

(During this Chorus, LORN *grasps a banner, which he waves with enthusiasm; his followers come behind him, and partly unsheath their dirks, and watch the countenance of their chief;* BRUCE *and* EDWARD *rise, supporting* ISABEL, *who appears extremely terrified;* RONALD *and* EDITH *observe.)*

LORN. I can no longer endure my rage—'tis Bruce! Rush on!

MUSIC.

(General movement; RONALD *rushes forward, his sword drawn;* ISABEL *throws herself at his feet, her veil falls off;* EDITH *grasps the arm of* LORN; BRUCE *and* EDWARD *have their hands upon their swords.* PICTURE.)

ISA. Mercy! save him, thou. (*To* RONALD.)

RON. Forbear! not in my sight, while I have strength to wield a brand, o'ermatched by odds, shall blood of warrior stain my father's halls.

LORN. Talk not to me of odds or match, nothing shall screen a murderer. Restitution for my kinsman's life! I demand it.

BRUCE. Murderer! madman, forbear! thou knowest not what thou utterest; thy kinsman was my vassal, as thou art; he betrayed me to the enemy who usurps my right; he died, by this good weapon, a traitor's death, as thou thyself shalt die, thus, sword to sword.

LORN. In vain thou hold'st my hand, Edith. Will not even

new insult rouse thy wounded pride?—is not his perfidy, (*points to* RONALD,) his coldness, all explained in the presence of that girl—'tis Isabel.

RONALD } Isabel!
EDITH }

RON. v thee not till now.

EDITH. (*Weeps.*)

LORN Shame on these tears!

Well, I ooner see thee dead, here at my feet

EDITH. irst, burst m (*Weeps; and exit with* CATHLEEN, R. H.)

LORN. Now clansmen, to the death! rush on!

BRUCE. Heaven preserve the right!

RON. Numbers by numbers best may be opposed. Children of the Isles, advance! For honour and hospitality!

LORN. Traitor! (*Music.*)

(ISABEL *retreats with a scream, and just as the two parties are about to rush forward, the folding doors burst open and the* ABBOT *appears with a religious train.*)

ABBOT. Forbear! What means this black impiety? Came we not hither to preside o'er holy rites? Let him beware who welcomes us with blood.

LORN. 'Tis excommunicated Bruce, holy father! A curse! pronounce a curse!

BRUCE. Beware of curses, which do curse again, and desolate the heart that first conceived them! Mark how enwrapped the sainted Abbot stands! thy base injuntion chills his aged blood.

LORN. 'Tis the stillness of the night ere thunder bursts from heaven! Listen! his dreadful denunciation—now attend.

(*A pause. They observe the* ABBOT, *who gradually relaxes with symphony from abstraction.*)

SOLO—ABBOT.

(*The Words by Sir Walter Scott.*)

"I feel within mine aged breast
A pow'r that will not be repress'd;
It prompts my voice, it swells my veins,
It burns, it maddens, it constrains!
Inspir'd by Heaven's supreme behest,
I *bless* thee, and thou shalt be *bless'd.*"

(BRUCE *sinks at his feet.*)

CHORUS.
Thou shalt be bless'd.

LORN.
What sounds of hellish discord those I hear!
Their curses change to blessings on my ear!
Thus degraded; humbled, low,—
Edith, sister, where art thou?

CATHLEEN *enters, with* EDITH'S *veil and wreath on her arm,* R.H.

CATHLEEN.
In disguise she's fled the castle!

LORN.
How?

CATHLEEN.
O'er the lake,
While around the billows break,
In a little lonely skiff,
Forth she's gone.

LORN.

Long as my life my hate shall last! (*To* RONALD.)
My fierce revenge, the lightning's blast.
Tremble for my future scorn!
Up with the banner—the banner of Lorn!

ISABEL.

'd,
st.

and followers, P.S.U.E.)

BRUCE. Sweet Isabel, to the holy cloister; and, if fate orbid not, soon, in happier times we'll meet again.

DUET AND SEMI-CHORUS.

ISABEL.

Ever thine my fervent pray'rs,
Ever thine my silent tears;
For the sad and lonely cell,
Warrior Chief, farewell, farewell!

RONALD.

Guard her, father, as thy shrine;
Let no danger near her stray;
Where she kneels in pensive thought,
There shall holy spirits stay.

ISABEL, ABBOT, &c.

Blessings with ye ever dwell;
Gallant warriors, fare ye well, &c.

BRUCE. (*Drawing his sword.*) Onward! march to glory!

BATTLE CHORUS.

Lead, lead to battle, O!
Bravely! bravely!
Lead, lead to battle, O!
Down with the foe!
March o'er the mountains, your country redeeming,
Hearts in a glow,
Strike, strike, the blow,—
Down with the foe!
March from your homes, and your hearth-fires beaming.
Lead, lead, &c.

(*During this Chorus a grand march has been formed on stage,* ISABEL, ABBOT, *&c., passing through folding-doors; general movement;* BRUCE *and characters retire up,* RONALD *and* VASSALS *bowing allegiance.*

PICTURE AS CURTAIN FALLS.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A solitary pass of rocks, opening to a loch and torrent; a small cave L. H.; *rock* R. H.

Music. Four PIRATES *discovered looking off* R. H.

Enter LORN *and* DONALD R. H. 2 *Ent.*

LORN. You, Donald, to your lurking place; when I give the signal, by thrice exclaiming "*The arrow to his heart!*" you remember—eh?

DON. Aye, aye, the arrow to his heart!

(*Retires behind rock* R. U. E.)

LORN. Nor shall Ronald's self escape—our shafts are unerring. Away to your concealment! (PIRATES *exit* U. E. L. H.) Revenge!

SONG.—LORN.

Revenge! revenge! my soul inspire,
Nerve my grasp with deadly steel;
My sword shall wear the lightning's fire,
My with'ring brow the thunder peal.

Like the storm which fells the oak,
Low at my feet each foe shall lie;
Who dares my eagle flight oppose,
He shall die!—he shall die!—shall die!
Revenge, &c.

Enter CORMAC *and* PIRATE 2 *Ent.* R. H.

COR. He comes!—'Tis the Bruce!—well I know him.

Where's the dumb boy whom we picked up amongst the rocks just now?

PIRATE. In the cave there asleep. (*Pointing* L. H.)

COR. 'Tis well—let him sleep, on.

(*Music. They exeunt cautiously,* CORMAC *and* PIRATE R. H. 1 *Ent.;* LORN 1 *Ent.* L. H.)

EDITH *enters timidly from the cave, in the habit of a boy; she listens, looks after* LORN *and* CORMAC DOIL, *and starts as* DONALD *shews himself an instant,* R. H. E., *on rock, fixing an arrow in his bow; she trembles, and imitates with her hands the twanging of a bow-string; she appeals to Heaven;—approaching footsteps;* EDITH *hurries back to cave.* BRUCE, RONALD, EDWARD, *and* DUGAL, *enter* U.E.R.H.

BRUCE. Nature slumbers in the lap of this mountain, as serenely as an infant on its mother's bosom. Treachery lives not beneath the shadow of these peaceful rocks! Here let us breathe awhile, till our accumulating followers, whose speed our eager footsteps outstrip, arrive to join us.

EDW. Hark! that way (R. H.) heard I not footsteps grating on the sand?

BRUCE. (L. C.) Can it be our looked-for friends, whom we on to seek?

DUG. (L.) Friends!—no, no, my lord!—friends should be open-faced. Those fellows, couching behind this rock and then that, give one very much the idea of spies or cut-throats.

RON. (R. C.) If our free passage they contest, our hands be on our blades.

DUG. That's what I say, my lord. (*Touching his sword.*)

BRUCE. Forbear!—enough of blood rests upon my head

already; and, though yon men have evil mien and downward looks, they are Scotsmen. 'Twere better first, with peaceful word, accost them. (*Enter* CORMAC, *&c.* O. P.) Good morrow, mountaineers. Whence come ye? — who are ye?

COR. Who is he that asks it?

RON. Ronald of the Isles, who has a right to question here, and will be answered.

COR. We cry ye mercy, Lord of the Isles. We are honest men—fishermen on the loch, and now awhile, for pastime, hunters of the deer.

DUG. (*Aside.*) Well, for honest men, they look more like thieves than many I've seen at the gibbet.

COR. We seek but to refresh ourselves in these rugged rocks, an' it would please ye to partake our homely meal, I'll warrant better venison was never tasted, even in Artonish.

BRUCE. I will not seem to doubt them; followers, too, so near. Friends, we seek not to mar your hospitality.

COR. Our board is instant spread. (*They bring forward provisions, and spread them on the ground.*) If Sir Knight would have no objection to a little music, rough mountaineers though we be, we delight in harmony.

BRUCE. Be brief then, friend, and despatch, for brief is the time we have to tarry.

COR. Yes, we'll dispatch so fast as possible. Repose yourselves, I pray. Andrew shall take his harp. Ho! minstrel, come thou hither.

(*Re-enter* LORN *as a minstrel* L. H., *touching the harp as the* PIRATES *arrange themselves;* BRUCE *leans against his spear, &c.* EDITH *enters at the sound of the harp; she starts at the sight of* RONALD, *and is confounded.*)

COR. What ails thee, boy? The wine there—haste! (*Chord.* EDITH *takes up a keg, and places it at* CORMAC'S *feet.*) How now, is this your manners? To the chief first, off with your cap, and give it on bended knee.

(*Music.* EDITH *trembles; she takes off her cap, and, timidly kneeling to* RONALD, *presents the keg.*)

RON. Those features! My gentle youth, fear not me—whence this agitation?

COR. He's dumb—at least, we never heard him speak.

BRUCE. His fair deportment shames the mountain roughness. What name call ye him?

COR. We know not. We found him wandering; we invited him hither; so ill a weed, 'tis odds but we leave him behind us.

RON. Would he willingly become a soldier's follower?

(*Music.* EDITH *runs suddenly towards him, touches her heart with enthusiasm, takes up the shield of* RONALD, *bends her head over it, in token of submission.*)

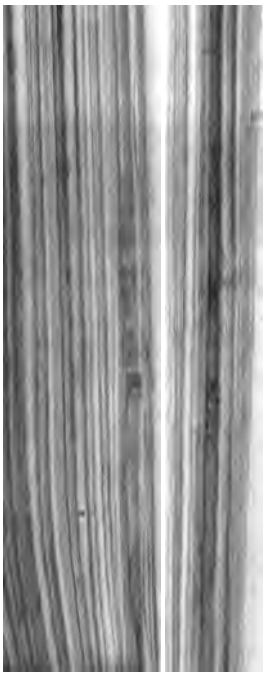
Poor lad! it were charity to take him from such stern guardians. This for his ransom! (*Gives gold to* CORMAC, *on* R. H.) He's mine! Art thou content, boy? (EDITH *assents.*)

BRUCE. Now, minstrel, the song, and away.

AIR—LORN.

Merrily, while the deer is browsing
Under the rock—under the rock,
Nimbly flies the hunter's dart,
From the bowstring to the heart.

Merrily, while the deer is browsing,
There he lies—
There he dies!
Under the rock—under the rock.



Un
Nimb
Fr

LORN. Now, to
(*As Donald obey*
before RON
Picture.)

DUN. What tre
unsheathing his sw
escape! (*Pointing*
strangle the dog wi
coward, when I ret

COR. (*Attempti*
thee!—

RON. (*Striking h*

(*Skirmish. The*
maining. *h*
hastily.)

arm—so, round my grateful heart, I twine thee close for ever.

(*Music.* EDITH, *with emotion, kisses the scarf, and expresses her gratitude. Distant Bugle.*)

BRUCE. Hark! on the opposite shore, our friends expect us; let us seek protection in their numbers. Come, Ronald, the brave boy, sustain him, thou. (*Exeunt* P. S., 1 E.)

(*Music. As they disappear,* LORN *and* CORMAC DOIL *return, beckoning on two others.* CORMAC *points off,* L. H., *and threatens vengeance with his dagger. Exeunt* L. H., *cautiously, with raised bows.*)

SCENE II.

Interior of a Monastery, with narrow stained windows, beneath which are panels, resembling the Saints.

Enter ISABEL, L. H.

SONG.

RECIT.

God of love! behold my sorrow—
Gently raise my drooping head—
O'er this bosom, plunged in anguish,
Balmy smiles of pity shed.
Thou alone canst tell my woe,
Thou alone assuage my care,
O'er me wave thy silv'ry wings,
And shield me from despair.

AIR.

Now Hope, thy dreams enchanting,
This breast inspiring fill;
And rapture's golden transports
My bounding bosom thrill.
Future visions crown m ew—
All radiant, light as hey move:
Visions softly—sweetl —
Replete with baln and love.
Oh, star of Hope still burn,
Kindly dispersing m from my brow,
With thee the joys o rn.
Dazzling and sparkin orning's glow—
Now Hope, thy dre chanting, &c.

(*Shouts and alarum, without. Enter the* ABBOT, *hastily*, L. H., 1 E., *meeting a* MONK, C. *door, in confusion.*)

ABB. Speak, brother—whence that sound, disturbing the peaceful serenity of our holy house?

MONK. The men of Lorn, in furious wrath assembled, cry, woe to the false Abbot of St. Bride's, who aids the cause of Bruce. Disappointed at the absence of the king, here, they demand, as a hostage, our guest, the Lady Isabel.

ABB. Wretched, deluded men! Lady! fear not thou.

(*Noise.*)

ISA. Ah! too wretched Isabel! Yield me to their fury, holy Abbot, lest, in their mistaken rage, even thy life pay the deadly forfeit.

ABB. Fear not for me, my daughter; they of Lorn dare not harm one of holy calling. In their house they have an ancient prophecy, which says—

"Let Lorn of shedding *holy* blood beware,
Or be his banner dust, his heart despair."

ISA. Oh! horror—the monastery is in flames!

(*Fire seen through the window.*)

Enter NUNS, *in confusion*, L. H., 2 E.

CONCERTED MUSIC.

ISABEL *and* NUNS.

Let us fly—let us fly!
Ruin fills the cloistered halls,
The sacred roof in ashes falls—
The flames ascend—the murky air
Teems with carnage and despair.

(*The* ABBOT *opens a panel in* R. *flat; they retire through it, closing the panel.* NUNS *rush off, on different sides. Crash. The Marauders burst in. Enter* CORMAC DOIL, *and a party of the Men of* LORN, *with swords and torches. Fire burning brightly at back of stage. They search about, and rush off different sides, as scene closes.*)

SCENE III.

A Mountain Pass.

(*Clash of swords, and shouts. Enter* RONALD, *his sword drawn, supporting* ISABEL.)

RON. Revive, lady!—the ruffians with whom I beheld thee struggling, from whose fell grasp I rescued thee, one hath fallen beneath my sword; the rest, pursued by my trusty followers, fly o'er the mountains.

ISA. Ah! heavens! do I owe my rescue to the generosity of the Lord of the Isles?

RON. Yes, beautiful Isabel, to him, whose existence is but of import, as it serves to promote the weal or happiness of thine!

Isa. Ah, in pity, speak of the safety of my guardian, royal Bruce!

Ron. He is well, with still increasing numbers, 'neath yonder mountains.

Isa. Conduct me to him.

Ron. Cut off [illegible] now, by the followers of Lorn—my ever[illegible] with the sword! I will shelter thee in some [illegible]se, [illegible]ave learned how far the pass may be dangerous to m[illegible]otsteps. Could I but conduct thee in safety to the ca[illegible]arrick?—Ah! Cathleen here!

Enter Cathleen, p. s.

Cath. Yes, my Lord, fairly turned out of the service of the Lord of Lorn, for being supposed accessary to the flight of Lady Edith!

Ron. And whither wouldst thou?

Cath. Home to the cottage of my grandfather, the boat builder. (*Pointing.*)

Ron. Ah, the honest man who lives there, is a true and loyal subject of the Bruce.

Cath. That he is, I'll warrant, and so am I.

Ron. Will Isabel attend this maiden?

Isa. Gladly; but promise that Bruce shall know speedily of my retreat.

Ron. I do! (*Puts her over to* r. h.)

Isa. Farewell!—with thanks and blessings—farewell! Now, maiden, to the cottage!

(*Exeunt* Isabel *and* Cathleen.)

Ron. Lovely Isabel! through suffering through gratitude,

still on me she looks but coldly. Ah, Isabel! Isabel! why am I not permitted to win, and wear thee in my bosom, like the sweet scarlet flower of thine own native Ellerslie.

BALLAD.

She's gentle as the zephyr,
That sips of every sweet,
She's fairer than the fairest lily,
In nature's soft retreat;
Her eyes are like the crystal brook,
As bright and clear to see;
Her lips outshine the scarlet flow'r
Of bonny Ellerslie.

Oh, were my love a blossom,
When summer skies depart,
I'd plant her in my bosom—
Her garden, here, my heart;
And oft I'd kiss her balmy lips,
So beautiful to see,
Which far outshine the scarlet flow'r
Of bonny Ellerslie.

Might I be King o' Scotland's throne,
And a' the world beside,
Right glad I'd gi' my crown to ha'
That lovely maid my bride.
The gate o' heaven is at her lip,
Denied, alas! to me—
That lip which shames the scarlet flow'r
Of bonny Ellerslie.

(*Exit* P. S.)

SCENE IV.

(Exterior of a Boat Builder's Cottage, R. H. *A rude shed,* L. H. *From the roof of the Cottage to a window in the shed, a rough plank is* [illegible] *for the purpose of drying sails or nets. Below th*[illegible]*w in the shed, a small door, from which so*[illegible]*ken s*[illegible]*nduct to the Lake. Timber, oars, s*[illegible]

(Enter CATHI[illegible] *from Cottage,* R. H.)

CATH. Must y[illegible]us in the cottage by ourselves?

DUG. Fear nothing, Cathleen, I must follow the footsteps of my lord; but should danger threaten, I will be near thee on the instant. In the meantime, do not you forget me for that churl Mac Dumpie. Remember!

SONG.

Forget not your soldier—he'll ne'er forget you,
Whatever his fortunes may be,
By the watch-fire bright, in each planet of night,
That beautiful face, love, he'll see.
Though he sleep on the heath, in his dreams, thy dear form,
Enraptured his fancy will view,
Then oh! for the love which is enter'd above!
Forget not your soldier! he'll ne'er forget you!

The wine-cup shall never be raised to this lip
Till warm'd with a prayer to thy name,
Through the terrible fight, like an angel of light,
Thine image will lead me to fame.
Though I fall 'mid the slain, with my life's latest sigh,
Heart-broken, I'll bid thee adieu.
Then, oh! for the love which is entered above!
Forget not your soldier! he'll ne'er forget you!

Exit L. H., 1 E.

CATH. Lud, lud—what jealous creatures these men are! Poor Mac Dumpie! I don't see why my loving Dugal should make me unkind to him; he's very amusing, and I'm very fond of laughing; but I forget Lady Isabel's alone in the cottage!

Enter MAC DUMPIE *in a boat—singing.*

Ah, the days, the bonny days,
The gude auld days that I ha' seen,
'Gin I live a hunner year,
I will nae see the like ageen.

CATH. Ah! is that you, Mac Dumpie?

MAC. *(Leaping on his oar to shore.)* Yes, bonny bairn,—yes. I heard you had returned, so I just trotted across the bog to say the civil thing, and smoke a whiff with your grandfather.

CATH. You are very kind, Mac, but grandfather is from home; and—

MAC. Oh, never mind that! my time's not precious; I'll just sit down on the hob, and we'll chat awhile, o'er auld lang syne.

CATH. I thank you, but I have a visitor within.

MAC. Ugh!—that fine-fangled fallow, Dugal, I suppose?

CATH. No, indeed; it's a lady.

MAC. A lady! and who would you more properly introduce her to than a gentleman like me, I beg leave to ask? *(Strutting.)* If that's the only reason why I'm not to come into the cottage, the sooner you open the door the better. *(Advancing.)*

CATH. *(With her back to the door.)* I say no.

MAC. Here's treatment, indeed! if you had come up to the castle of Carrick there, see if I, the seneschal, had shut

the door against you; but if, after all, this should be a story of yours, and my rival, Dugal, inside—I tell you I must enter. (*They struggle.*)

Enter ISABEL, *humbly clad.*

Lady Isabel!

ISA. Recognised!

MAC. Yes, lady, by a friend- e your father's vassal.

ISA. Yet, I heard you call y f Seneschal of Carrick; could I reach that cas le I w afety.

MAC. I am ready tte , instantly. (*Aside to* CATHLEEN.) You pe visitors soon desert you, after once having gained a at me. (*To* ISABEL.) This way, lady.

CATH. (*Looking* P. S.) Stay, a stranger advances.

MAC. The deuce! retire then, lady, and remain concealed; and though I must confess I am never so brave out of the castle as I am in it, I'll serve you to the full extent of my resolution. I'll pull my bonnet over my brow, slip on this old cloak, and pretend that this is my cottage, and that—but go in, or it will be too late.

CATH. I wish Dugal were here, as he promised—Mac is such a coward; but the shadow of a man is better than no protection. (*Exit with* ISABEL *into cottage.*)

MAC. (*Looking out.*) What a tall fellow, I hope he's not so bold as he's long. (*Busies himself pulling about the sail-cloth; sings.*)

Oh, the days, the bonny days, &c.

Enter BRUCE, *pale, and in haste, his sword drawn.*

BRUCE. Thank Heaven! I have reached the cottage first. I'll enter, and—

MAC. (*Opposing him.*) No, you don't; this cottage is my

property; I built it myself, and no stranger, with a drawn sword in his hand, shall enter, without first telling me his errand. (*Aside.*) Well done, bluster!

BRUCE. I am a soldier, pursued by overpowering enemies; a fatal and an intemperate warmth, in the heat of skirmish, cut me off from my friends. My life depends on your hospitality!

MAC. Ah! I have only your word for that; and, in times like these, one doesn't know where to trust, or where to doubt. Of which party are you, Lorn or Bruce?

BRUCE. What, if I should say Lorn?

MAC. Why then I should reply you have nothing to fear, for the men at thy heels are of Lorn's party. You'd better go and join them; we want no brawlers here.

BRUCE. What, if I should say Bruce?

MAC. Ah! that would alter the case materially; because then I should see you were hard pressed by the enemy, and besides, though they should burn the old cottage, and hang me up for a scarecrow, I never could refuse shelter to the friend of his king and country!

BRUCE. Honest man! in me then behold the truest, best friend of Robert Bruce.

MAC. As for his truest, best friend, that's a point might be disputed. His familiar friend you seem to me, else why plain Robert Bruce? He's called King Robert Bruce, here.

BRUCE. Well, well, 'tis a title, believe me, I have no desire to dispute; but now mine enemies footsteps sound in mine ear—my preservation is of import to Scotland—in the name of Bruce, I crave concealment in your cottage.

MAC. In the cottage!—I could afford no more were you the king himself. (*Aside.*) In the cottage! and Lady Isabel —you may be a spy, for aught I know.

BRUCE. If you require a reward—

MAC. I despise it; but I have my reasons at present for guarding the cottage from intruders. Here, go behind this sailcloth, and if you are but proving my zeal for Lorn, may the blow fall upon your own . (*Aside.*) Laud! I'm getting very much frightened inding myself so brave! Fooh! (*Fanning himself with p.*)

BRUCE. In the midst of a distress, how this blunt loyalty inspires my heart with ardour.

MAC. They come! in, or lost!

(BRUCE *goes under the sailcloth hangs against the cottage.*)

Enter CORMAC DOIL *and two others*, L. H.

MAC. (*Employing himself*, L. H.)

Oh, the days, &c.

COR. Halloo! where is he?

MAC. He! Who?

COR. The stranger whom we are in pursuit of; he entered here.

MAC. Oh, I don't know what you mean, not I. (*Singing.*)

Oh, the days, &c.

COR. But we know you for a traitor. Enter that cottage, and ransack every corner.

MAC. You have no authority to enter, nor shall you, save in the king's name, and that's a name I'm thinking likely to be set to nothing of yours, except your warrant for the gallows. If that wont frighten 'em, nothing will; I know it frightens me.

COR. The fool is drunk or mad—down with him!

(*Music. They struggle with* MAC, *rend the oar from his hand, and enter the cottage.*)

MAC. Beshrew this feeble hand! should they discover the Lady Isabel—

Enter CATHLEEN *and* ISABEL, *simply dressed.*

CATH. These men! Ah, lady!

ISA. Hush! remember! I pass for your sister.

BRUCE. *(Looking out.)* Isabel!

ISA. My lord! my dear guardian! *(Rushing into his arms.)*

MAC. Amazement! what is all this?

CATH. It is the king!

MAC. *(Falling on his knees.)* The king! and I—what have I done!—what have I said!—I'm sure always to thrust my head into the halter.

BRUCE. *(Raising him up.)* My worthy subject, kneel not thou! for, oh! were nations composed of men honest as yourself, then indeed would the state of kings be happy!

MAC. You pardon me, sire, but I shall never forgive myself! That air—I might have seen—I might have known—my impenetrable skull! Father always said 'twas thicker than a brick bat.

ISA. They approach again! oh, save yourself!

BRUCE. An instant more of concealment—caution!

MAC. I know my duty—I will do it. It's astonishing how bold one gets when one becomes acquainted with kings!

(As BRUCE *again retires, re-enter* CORMAC *and the others, looking about.)*

COR. Not there! Where have you concealed him?

MAC. Him! Who's him!

COR. Robert Bruce!

MAC. I conceal him! laud! you're joking! think of a

poor dev like me concealing a great king. (*Aside.*) I wish I could conceal myself.

COR. ok every where.

MAC. ad'nt you better look into my pocket?

COR. ce—search the shed.

(*They search.*)

MAC. Well, nov re to be favoured by your absence. Good b, ccellent friends, don't we? You will go—eh? (*Affecting regret.*)

COR. Don't grieve—we o drink your health before we depart.

MAC. In what?—loch water?

COR. No; out of this horn of usquebaugh, which my followers have found within there. Drink the loch water yourself. (*They laugh, and seat themselves, drinking.*)

MAC. (*Aside.*) I wish I'd known of the usquebaugh. I'd have swallowed it myself, or mixed it with poison for them.

COR. Who is that young girl? I didn't see her before.

(*Pointing to* ISABEL.)

MAC. She—oh, she's my other sister!

COR. Your other sister!

MAC. That is—she's not this sister!

(*Pointing to* CATHLEEN.)

COR. Who the devil supposed she was! (*To* CATHLEEN.) Young girl, can you sing? Come, sing us a song while we drink, and we will overlook your brother's rudeness to us gentlemen, if he be your brother—sing!

CATH. Not I indeed, *gentlemen*, (*sneeringly,*) I've lost my voice.

COR. Well, then, your sister.

MAC. We've no singers in our family. We come all of a husky race.

ISA. Indeed, brother, but you are mistaken. People say, who understand it too, that I sing tolerably well.

COR. That's well said for yourself; at all events, begin.

ISA. (*Aside to* MAC.) While I divert their attention, you—(*Pointing to* BRUCE, *who observes*)—Ah! now I remember a ditty, but you must pay particular attention. 'Tis the story of a ghost which was wont to walk every night through the castle of Annandale. Listen!

ALL. Aye! aye!

AIR.—ISABEL.

First it came, with silent tread,
Softly from the arras grey; (BRUCE *appears.*)
Then, with cautious ghost-like step,
Through the door it stole away!
Yes, yes, it stole away!

(BRUCE *enters cottage.*)

COR. What a strange beginning! Well, go on.

ISA. I almost forget it—I'm so perplexed, that—

COR. Well, if you forget it, why—

CATH. I remember it.

AIR.—CATHLEEN.

Then again it pass'd along
Through the lattice—sight of fear!
(BRUCE *at lattice.*)
O'er a beam that, worn with age,
Scarce a spectre's weight might bear.

(BRUCE *passes beam above their heads; the beam cracks;* ISABEL *screams.*)

COR. What the devil was that? (*They rise.*)

MAC. The old rafter there, don't you see? I'd thrown a

rope over it to dry my wet sail upon, and the weight of the canvass broke it,—that's all.

Cor. Ugh! but it wouldn't have been all, if it had cracked our heads. But how pale you turn, child!

Mac. Yes, sister thought the ghost was coming for her, I dare say, he—he—he!

Isa. I confess I was frighten

Cor. Frightened! Pshaw! ake an end of your story.

AIR.—Cathleen / Finale.

Till descending, fi task,
It reached a sol... boat;

(Bruce *peeps out at small door.*)

And, with more than human speed,
O'er the lake appeared to float.

(*During the last two lines,* Mac *has contrived to draw up the sail-cloth again in such a way as to cover the descent of* Bruce, *through the small door, down the steps into the boat.*)

Finale.

Cor. (*To* Mac.) What the plague are you doing there, sir, alone?

Mac. Only my duty—the Bruce is gone.

(*Lets the sail fall;* Bruce *glides off in the boat.*)

FINALE.—Cor.

Hang this traitor to a tree.

Mac.

Oh, dear me!

Cath. *and* Isa. (*imploring.*)

Pray you, sir, forbear—
Our hapless brother spare.

Cor.

Off, at once, his wretched head!

Mac. (*Falling.*)

That's sufficient—I am dead!

ISA. *and* CATH. (*withholding* CORMAC, *who draws his sword.*)

Pray you, sir, &c.

Enter DUGAL, RONALD, *&c. interposing.*

Hold!—suspend the fearful blow,
Or soon your recreant blood shall flow!

CORMAC, &c.

Cursed intrusion! overcome!—
This alone has spared your doom!

(*To* MAC.)

MAC, (*feeling his neck.*)

Yes, my head's on, lucky elf!
Now I'll take it off myself!

(*Going.*)

FIRST CHORUS.

The Bruce is saved,—the fav'ring gale
Fills the bosom of his sail!
Sharp the sword, and calm the sea,
Rejoice! rejoice! the Bruce is free!

SECOND CHORUS.

The Bruce, &c., &c.
Lament, lament, &c.

MUSIC.

Enter DUGAL, *&c., stopping them with their spears;* BRUCE *has spread the sail of the skiff; as he reaches the middle of the lake,* ISABEL *waves her scarf to him from an eminence;* LORN'S *party stand disconcerted,* O. P.; BRUCE'S *party present their spears in the centre;* CATHLEEN *is near* ISABEL; *and a* PICTURE *is formed as the curtain falls.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.— ENE I.

Moonlight; the summit of a n n, commanding, over a deep glen, a distant view Broadich Bay; RONALD, DUGAL, *and* EDWARD *di ered.*

TRIO.

The moon goes down,—'tis near the hour,—
The glow-worm's light is on the plain;
Wake, Freedom, wake! assert your power!
Shake from your neck the galling chain!
'Tis the hour!
Freedom, wake! assert your power,
And march to liberty again!

AIR—RONALD.

Let the beacon's golden ray
Light the warrior on his way!

(DUGAL *brings torch from* 1 E.R.H.; *exit* L.H., 1 E., *and is seen on platform,* L.H., *lighting the beacon; others are kindled in the distance; shouts without, and soldiers ascend mountain from the glen beneath, moving forward as another band come down platform,* R.H., *and soldiers, with steel clubs, descend mountains,* L.H, *and enter,* 1 E., L. H.; *females are seen in the glen waving their plaids; the musicians of the various clans fill up the back, while fresh clans arrive during the following.)*

ROUND—Dugal, Edward, Ronald, &c.

From steep to steep, our friend's reply,
And glory's lustre gilds the sky!
Hark!
The trumpet's blast—the pibrock's hum!
In varied clans they come! they come!

(*At the end of this the soldiers advance, wheel, and again ascend platforms,* L. *and* R., *the steel clubs forming across stage; grand march; flourish, and enter* Bruce, L. H., 1 E., *attended by officers, in complete armour; soldiers shout, and women wave their hands; the beacons burning;* Ronald, Edward, *&c., kneel.*)

Bruce. My noble clansmen! my faithful subjects! my children! again free and in arms, I am amongst you, more eager to revenge *your* wrongs, than to resent my *own*—panting more to requite your fidelity, than with a remembrance of my own indignities! My foot is on my native heath—my hand firmly grasps my good claymore. The path of glory lies open before us—'tis for liberty we struggle—to free ourselves from oppression! Let us not turn back—let us not tremble—let us not falter—let us perish sooner! See, on every hill the beacon of liberty is burning! Our friends announce their readiness to attend us! Forward! forward to the field!

CHORUS, *same as end of Act I.*

Lead, lead to battle, O!

(*Soldiers march up mountains, women waving their hands,* Bruce *acknowledging,* Ronald, Edward, *&c., bowing allegiance; the beacons throw a strong light on the picture, and scene closes.*)



RON. What ai
limbs! What if th
boy, courage!

(*Music.* EDI
rock for s

RON. Poor child
while duty calls.
cave; even should
timid one, the battle

(*Music. She w*
ring, and r

RON. What agitat
even I should know t
plighted my vows of
loved me as I have
slighted by me as I ha
But this mystery—th
gone!—Boy! boy!—H
out.) Ha! the batt

My own banner over me wave,
My broken shield over me fling;
And carve on the oak o'er my grave—
"The soldier who died for his king!"

Yet, maid, when my life-blood is streaming,
One tear to my last moment given,
Like a star in thy blue eyes beaming,
To me were a foretaste of heaven!
My own banner over me wave,
My broken shield over me fling;
And carve on the oak o'er my grave—
"The soldier who died for his king!"

(*Exit* R.H.)

SCENE III.

A Gothic hall; L.H., *in flat, a low closet, window in* R.H. *flat, the place decorated with military trophies.*

Enter DUGAL *and* MAC DUMPIE, *with drinking horns,* L., 2 E.

MAC. Ha, ha, ha! No, no, friend Dugal, love's too serious a subject for jesting!—and the name of one's mistress is like—like—Lord! what a speech I would make, if—

DUG. *If!*—that *if* is a bar to the aspiring pretensions of thousands, greater heroes than even you or I; but here's a health to your mistress! What did you say her name was?

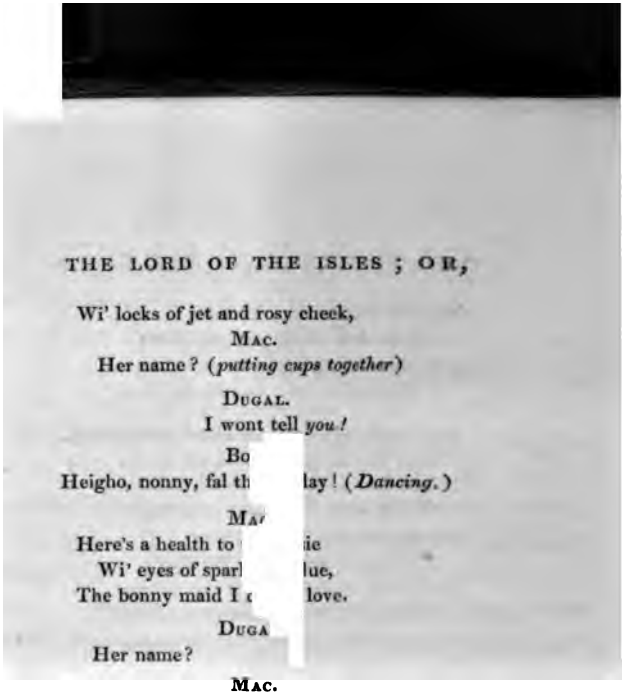
MAC. Hum! But stay, I'll tell you—fill high!

(DUGAL *pours out of flask.*)

DUET—DUGAL *and* MAC DUMPIE.

DUGAL.

Here's a health to the lassie,
The lassie fond and true;


Wi' locks of jet and rosy cheek,
MAC.
Her name? (*putting cups together*)
DUGAL.
I wont tell *you!*
Bo
Heigho, nonny, fal th lay! (*Dancing.*)
MA
Here's a health to ie
Wi' eyes of spar lue,
The bonny maid I love.
DUGA
Her name?
MAC.
I wont tell *you!*
BOTH.
Heigho, nonny, &c.

MAC. (*Hiccoughing a little.*) Ha, ha, h-a! depend on't, Lorn's people wont find entrance here! No, no, all the while my noble master, the Earl of Carrick, has been with the Bruce, here have I lived in this turret, like a snail in its shell, letting nobody enter. No, no, the devil himself shouldn't have entered! Speaking of the devil—your health, Dugal! Give me your hand, my boy—we'll never fall out!

DUG. Never! (*Aside.*) Drunken fool! I can't think how Cathleen could ever endure the sight of him! I'm sorry I must trouble you with Cathleen till my return. But what should a woman do in battle?

MAC. What should a woman do in battle!—my sentiments to a —. Give me your hand—there *is* a woman, when I think of her, I've (*drinks*) not a drop of comfort left!

DUG. (*Aside.*) Who the deuce can she be? Oh, Mac, I'm so happy to grasp your hand—I know, old comrades as

we are, you'll scorn to take the least advantage of Cathleen in my absence, while I'm abroad, as I may say, fighting the battles of my darling country!

MAC. I don't know that—I don't know that! While you are fighting your darling country's battles abroad, pray isn't it necessary somebody should be raising darling recruits at home? A smart fellow like me! The truth is, the women all lay siege to me!

DUG. Ha, ha, ha! Why a woman might carry you abroad in her *work bag!*

MAC. Isn't that better than being neglected, or left at home like her *thread* paper?

DUG. *Thread paper!* But I'll *sew up* the rascal's mouth! I'm a soldier—do you mean to insult me?

MAC. You a soldier? Boo! Did you ever see me fight? Stay till then, and die!

DUG. I *should* die with *laughing!*

MAC. Laughing! ha, ha! I'll *tickle* you to your perfect satisfaction; and if you don't die with laughing, it shall be no fault of mine! (*Taking a very long sword which is leaning against scene.*) Now, then, coming to the *point!*

(*Whetting sword on floor.*)

DUG. Ha, ha, ha!

MAC. There—there—there! (*Thrusting at him.*)

DUG. Oh, oh, oh! 'sdeath! the booby's drunk!

MAC. You shall be *dead* drunk in an instant!

(*Throws his large bunch of keys at* DUGAL, *who stooping down, the keys go through the window.*)

Enter CATHLEEN, L. H., 1 E.

CATH. (*Crossing to* R.H.) Oh, horror!—in his passion he's thrown the keys of the castle out of the window—they've

absolutely fallen over the cliff! We shall be starved to death, like birds in a cage!

MAC. Here's a precious piece of business! All this comes through disputing about a jilt of a woman. (*Going to window.*) O! ho! huzza! if ther[illegible]t Dig Dinmont, the fisherman, as he calls himself, pick[illegible] the keys! Honest soul, he's coming to restore them[illegible] worthy creature!

DUG. (*Running to window.*[illegible]at a fisherman!—'tis Cormac Doil, the pirate!—the v[illegible] I know him!

MAC. Then I'm a deceased[illegible]*ler!* I shall certainly be tossed into the *Loch*, with my[illegible]n *keys* about my neck, to *hamper* my swimming! Oh, I've a swimming in my head already. (*Shouts without.*) I'll hide myself in the crockery closet. (*Goes into closet* L.H. *flat.*)

DUG. We are lost!

Enter ISABEL, L. H., 1 E.

ISA. What is it I hear?—the castle betrayed? oh, Heaven!

DUG. Lady, we'll die in your defence!

(*Shouts; crash; the doors burst open;* CORMAC DOIL *and* EIGHT PIRATES *enter,* L.H., 1 E., *with drawn swords.*)

COR. Resistance is in vain!—our numbers thrice exceed your own!

DUG. '*Tis* he! *You* here?—why I thought—

COR. That I had been a prisoner; but Cormac Doil is only to be secured—

DUG. (*Aside.*) By a rope to the gallows!

COR. We seek the lady Isabel, by princely Lorn's command—a hostage to remain till Bruce surrender! Follow us, lady, and we go in peace—resist us, and 'tis the signal for massacre!

DUG. Fear not *thou*, lady; speak but the word, and our little band shall rush like lightning on.

ISA. No, no, not for me!—we are in their power! The blood which a nobler and a better cause requires, shall not be wasted for a woman's freedom, which even that blood could not purchase! Follow me! — even now through my despair the voice of Bruce invites me, and whispers, that a brighter sun is rising than ever beamed or fell on Scotland's glory!

(ISABEL *is led off*, L. H., 1 E., *by* TWO PIRATES; DUGAL *and* CATHLEEN *follow.*)

COR. But that rascally warder! — where does he conceal himself? (*Crash behind closet.*) Search the closet? (*Another crash; they force the door, and drag* MAC *out.*)

MAC. (*Sheepishly.*) Ah, is that you!—how d'ye do?

COR. You see, although you never would gratify my curiosity by a peep at the armoury, I've found my way into the castle at last—eh?

MAC. Ah! I see you intend it as a little agreeable surprise; but how could I suppose a person, calling himself Dig Dinmont, a fisherman, was Cormac Doil, a *gentleman* like *you!*

COR. A *gentleman!* Pshaw! you'll soon perceive I'm a *plain man!*

MAC. Yes, that's plain enough! Will you take anything?

COR. Yes, I'll take *you*, and requite you for all the tricks you played at the Loch, by concealing your features, and that fine tale about your sister. You told me also last night, from the turret, to go to the devil; now, I waited till daylight that you might go with me!

MAC. To the devil! Do you live there, then?

COR. You shall see.—March!

MAC. I'm very ill.

COR. Change of air is good!

MAC. But not for me; your warm climate never suited my cold constitution.—I must remain still as possible—I've been completely laid on the shelf, I assure you—that's why you found me in the closet.

COR. I've sworn to nail your ears to the prow of my boat. March! to the water side!

MAC. Nail my ears to— (*covering his ears with his hands*) hear it ye fates! cr[illegible]y precious ears! Oh! I—the only representative of t[illegible]c Dumpies—the *head* of the family without *ears!* An[illegible]le! compassionate Cormac Doil! (CORMAC *pushes him along.*) I can't support this indignity—I—oh! (*He falls; they carry him off kicking,* CORMAC *laughing,* L. H., 1 E.)

SCENE IV.

A Gothic Apartment.

Shouts without, L. H. *Enter* LORN, *hastily,* R. H.

LORN. Ho! what means that cry?

Enter CORMAC and PIRATE *conducting* ISABEL, L. H.

COR. See, my lord—I have performed my promise. (*Retires,* L. H.)

LORN. My brave Cormac! Welcome, lady! welcome to the halls of Lorn!

ISA. The halls of Lorn! The halls of Bruce! Let me kneel upon these sacred floors, and invoke of Heaven for the usurper a traitor's doom; for the outcast, benediction. (*Kneels.*)

LORN. Rise! haughty and imperious lady! my captive—if it please me, my *bride!*

ISA. (*Rising.*) Thy bride! never! While there are daggers, Isabel will never fear a refuge from dishonour!

LORN. Dishonour! but a woman speaks—a lovesick woman, too. Away with her! (PIRATE *takes* ISABEL *off*, R. H., 1 E.) I'll hear no more.

(*Enter* BRUCE *as a monk*, L. H., 1 E.)

Now! who art thou?

BRUCE. Save ye, lord, and peace to this domain! May the sword of its enemies be sheathed!

LORN. Speak, monk, thine errand.

BRUCE. From Robert of Scotland, came I; nay, start not, a poor defenceless monk bodes little of ill to great and armed chiefs—my mission is from heaven—I speak it and depart—Robert of Scotland, with a Christian prayer, salutes thee, Lord of Lorn, and prays thee quit, as it shall be, in safety, on a warrior's word, these ancient halls of Bruce. Full loath is he to stain his father's hearth with blood of Scotland's sons, by Scotland's children shed.

LORN. Why, this is madness; doth he know our strength?

BRUCE. From autumn trees not faster fall the leaves than drop thy friends away. While Bruce, a gathering and still gathering mist, surrounds thee in his denseness, till thou'rt lost; therefore, this generous 'vantage hath he sent; thou and thy followers go, and fear no harm—so shall no blood be shed.

LORN. Beshrew thee, canting priest, canst tell me why I should not, for this daring, take thy life?

BRUCE. Your kindred oath and legend:—

"Let Lorn of shedding *holy* blood beware.
Then be his banner dust, his heart despair."

LORN. If I make thee captive—

BRUCE. In the morning ten thousand warriors, needing absolution, may ask me at thy gate.

LORN. By heaven! a thought has entered now my mind; this boasting Bruce, I'll pro[illegible]im to the soul; this very night I'll marry Isabel! th[illegible]alt perform the rite, and bear in mockery the tidings t[illegible] What, ho! conduct the lady hither. (PIRATE *leads I*[illegible]L *on*, R. H.)

BRUCE. Isabel!

ISA. That voice! that voi[illegible] (*To him.*)

LORN. Whence this surpris[illegible] What is it I behold! those features! 'tis the Bruce! (*Blows bugle.*)

Music. Enter a number of VASSALS, *and* CORMAC, *armed.* R. H. *and* L. H.

BRUCE. (*Throwing off cloak.*) Yes, the Bruce! behold me, and tremble as though a spirit of light had burst amongst ye, armed with a tempest's wrath. (*Pause and picture.*)

ISA. Alas! what has brought thee hither?

BRUCE. Humanity! a warrior's first and noblest attribute! Sons of my own Scotland, I would spare your lives—save the eyes of your widows and your children from tears—your hands from the crimson of infamy. The sight of their true king in his own halls turns them to their duty. Soldiers, I am here to preserve you.

LORN. Away with him!—Not obeyed! Cowards! dogs! see me die then, or see me triumph.

BRUCE. Lorn, beware!

Music. They fight. LORN *nearly overcome.* CORMAC *and* VASSALS *rush on* BRUCE *and disarm him.* ISABEL *retires behind.*



LORN. Down with him to a dungeon—to the deepest dungeon.—This artful stratagem in person to subdue my vassals will not avail. To-morrow, the axe on the ramparts shall do its deadly office.

BRUCE. Yon traitor knows not what he does; my fol. lowers hem this castle like a forest—the conviction that Bruce is here, will inspire them with a thousand times more ardour than though their true king led them on to battle. Freedom, like the wings of an eagle, darting from the clouds, hovers over us; it lights upon our battlements, and victory's shout will speedily be heard where treason lies expiring in the dust.

(*Music. Forced out by Soldiers and* CORMAC, L. H. 1 E.)

LORN. For thee, proud beauty, be this apartment thy prison, till the castle chimes shall sound the signal for our nuptials. (*Exit* R. H.)

ISA. Still will I cherish hope—the rose may fade in winter, but the summer comes, and then it blooms again.

SONG.

Though roses wither in winter time,
When snow peeps in at the door,
Their crimson lips the golden spring
Shall sweetly kiss once more.
My bow'r shall be as green again,
Wi' fragrant eglantine;
While sma' birds sing, in merry strain,
The notes of auld lang syne.

Though Sorrow's clouds o'ercast the soul
When Woe peeps in at the heart,
Joy's simmer sun more bright will glow
When winter storms depart.
My bower, &c.

(*Exit.*)

SCENE V.

A set Forest, and centre Oak. Hollow clumps of Trees, scattered about.

MAC I *aution*, L. H. 2 E.

MAC. A] de my escape for, truly; if I go ls of my master, and be hung up ing] d if I go that way I shall be griped by of rible sea pirate—the old porpoise. Oh, he's coming—I'm in a beautiful predicament, I a.... no courage of my own, so I'll be heart of oak. I'll—oh!

(*Runs into the hollow of the tree.*)

Music. Enter CORMAC *and* EIGHT SOLDIERS, *conducting in* EDITH *bound*, L. H. 1 E.

COR. Now then, my dumb companion, I said we should settle accounts, if you remember. Here's the place where all my culprits suffer! Tie him to that oak. (*They tie* EDITH *to the Oak.*) Now, draw your arrow to its head. (*To* PIRATE, *who raises his bow.*) And—

MAC. Oh, dear—oh, dear! you'll shoot me!

COR. Here's an apparition! 'Tis the rascally warder of Carrick! Ah! dog!—what, you thought your light heels had saved you, eh? but I am judge here, and pronounce, at once, your sentence, soon as we've despatched this varlet: you shall be swung, *heels upwards*, on the same tree.

MAC. Tender hearted Mr. Dinmont, or Cormac, or whatever other interesting names you may like to be called by, only hear me—I'm of your party! *Lorn* for ever—*huzza!*

COR. Keep the rascal silent, or strangle him!

MAC. Strangle me! Oh, dear! if that wont silence me, nothing will.

COR. Now, boy, behold the very arrow which you so artfully warded from the heart of Ronald. See whether he'll come as timely to ward it from yours. Prepare! —die!

Music. As he draws the bow, RONALD *suddenly enters with* SOLDIERS, R. H., 2 E. DUGAL *and* EDWARD *follow.* MAC DUMPIE *falls on his knees,* R. C.

MAC. Here's a blessed change! *Bruce* for ever—*huzza!*

EDW. Thou here, Mac Dumpie? Why have you left the castle? (RONALD *releases* EDITH.)

MAC. Oh, yon villain, my Lord, stole into the castle, and carried off the Lady Isabel; he wanted to carry off me, only I carried myself off.

EDW. Isabel gone! Where is she?

COR. (*Maliciously.*) Prisoner with Bruce, in yonder turrets.

RON. We shall seek them there.

COR. Man's strength is vain to pierce yon flinty walls—he, only, who wears the ring of Lorn can pass the drawbridge; but two such rings there be—one on the finger of our chief exists, the other lies buried with the Lady Edith, in the Loch.

(*Music.* EDITH *hears and points to a ring on her finger, aside.*)

RON. Insolent traitor!—peace! Prepare for punishment!

MAC. Let me pronounce his sentence, my lord. Since he is so fond of hanging heels upwards, let him have his swing on the next oak.

RON. ard him, there. (SOLDIERS *march.*)

(*Music. Exit* RONALD, ISABEL, EDWARD, *and* DUGAL, R. H., *followed by* SOLDIERS, *conducting* LORN'S *party as prisoners.* MAC DUMPIE *binds* CORMAC, *and drags him off,* R. 1 em.)

V.

A *Magnificent Gothic C* ith *curtains of tapestry in back ground; the roo* ed; *a creset burning from centre.*

Shouts without.

Enter LORN R. H.

LORN. In vain he eludes my vengeance! Come forth, detested Bruce! Where art thou?

(GUARD *rushes in* L. H. 1 *Ent.*)

GUARD. My lord! my lord! the Bruce hath escaped! The castle is attacked; the cry is, "Bruce!"

LORN. Be the tongue withered that breathes his hated name!

GUARD. Near the gates the Abbot of St. Bride's has been wounded; and the ancient prophecy, denouncing the house of Lorn—"When holy blood is shed," terrifies the people.

LORN. Abhorred of my soul as is that Abbot, accursed be the hand that shed his blood! It bodes ill.

(*Loud shouts without, and cries of* "BRUCE!")

GUARD. See! our soldiers, headed by the prisoner Dugal, are thronging hither! They seek the Bruce!



LORN. In vain they seek him. Miscreant Bruce! where art thou? Approach!—approach! and die!

(*Loud shouts. The curtains are suddenly withdrawn, and a distant country is seen thronged with* SOLDIERS, *and* BRUCE, RONALD, EDWARD, EDITH, *and* ISABEL *come forward;* SOLDIERS *rush on from all sides;* DUGAL *enters with the banner of Lorn, which he throws at* BRUCE'S *feet;* LORN, *petrified, lets his sword fall, while his party ground arms;* VASSALS, *&c. fill the stage.*)

CATHLEEN *enters* L. H. 1 *Ent.*

BRUCE. (C.) Enough! enough! the glory and the victory is our own! (*Loud shouts.*)

LORN. (R. C.) Horrible sound! Wake me not!—wake me not from a dream of death! (*looking round,*) darkness cover my soul! (*Crossing* L. C.)

BRUCE. Son of Lorn, go free! Bruce seeks not to stain his triumph with blood! In the sky of glory, the brightest planet is that which beams with mercy!

LORN. And must my dream of life be ended thus? Oh! that my lips could breathe a pestilence, and, like the upas, scatter desolation round me! (*Exit* L. H.)

EDITH. (*On* R.) My brother!

BRUCE. (C.) Speakest thou, boy?

RON. (R. C.) 'Tis Edith of Lorn. Henceforth, lovely Edith, I'm thine—and only thine! Take back thy ring, and with it Ronald's love. Pardon me—pity me!

EDITH. That still I love thee, do not scorn me still!

(Taking the ring.) Hope whispers, Ronald, like a struggling rose! With this I bind thee to my heart for ever!

(Concealing her face in his bosom.)

BRUCE. In the hearts of my people—and here, *(Taking* ISABEL's *hand,)* I seek repose.

DUG. *(Embracing* CATHLEEN.) And I here.

BRUCE. Let the sun of peace arise, and shed its golden rays on dear old Scotland. Bright to the warrior is the chaplet of victory; bright to the lover's heart are the hopes of affection realized;—but brighter far, is the smile of surrounding friends, which gilds that chaplet, and approves that joy!

(Grand March; SOLDIERS *come down both sides, and fill up the centre, then divide; and* BRUCE *is seen seated on a splendid chair of state, with the regal robe on, and the* ABBOT *presenting the crown;* BRUCE *rises, and leads* ISABEL *to the state chair beside him during the*

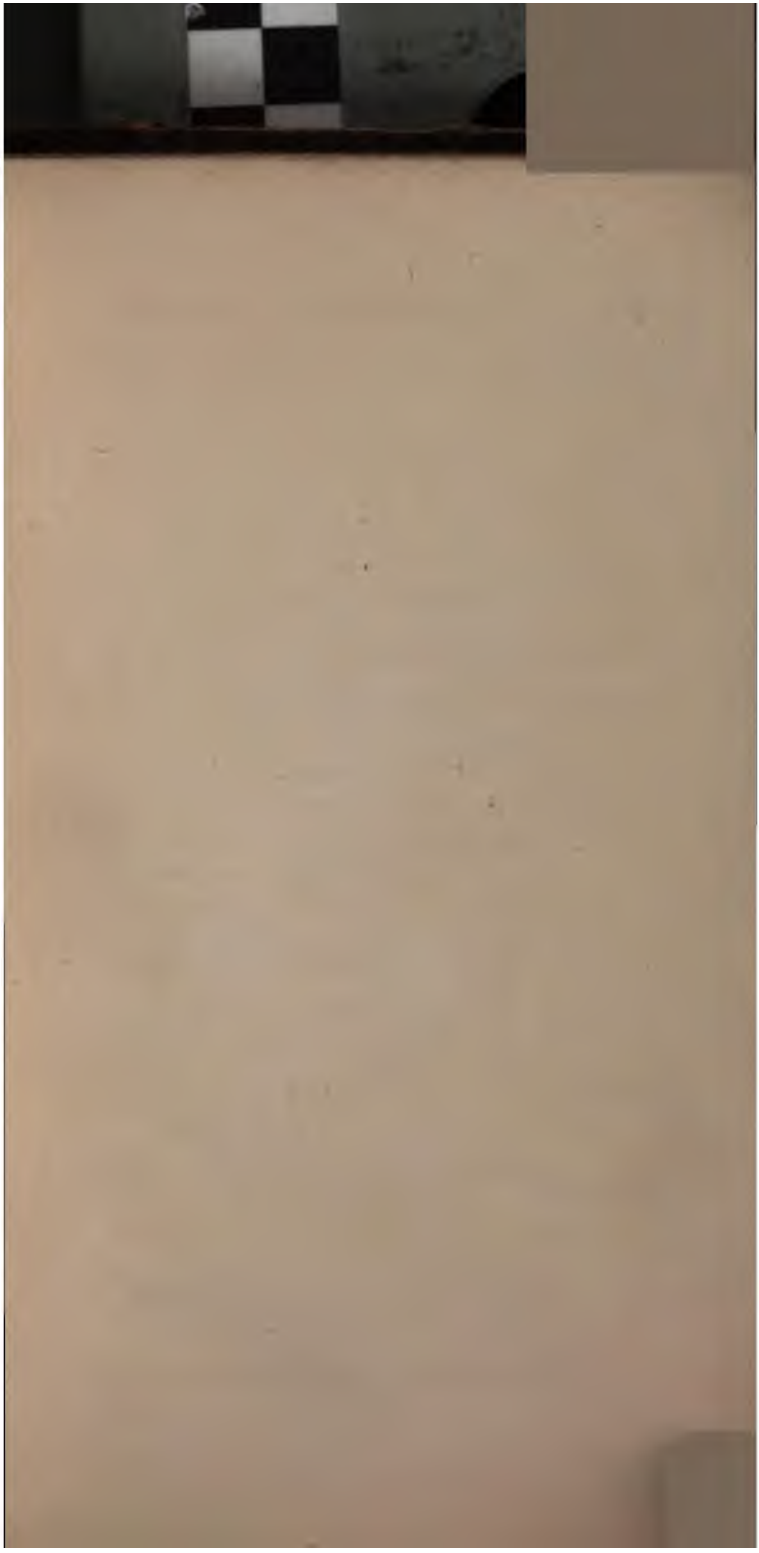
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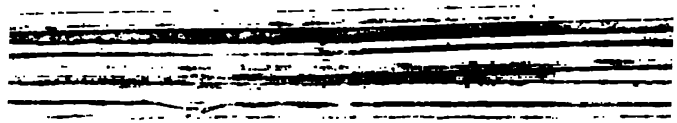
Victory! victory!
The eagle is in his nest,
The day is won,
The battle done,
Rejoice each manly breast!
Victory! victory!

GRAND PICTURE.

All characters kneel; SOLDIERS *wave their banners, and shout as the curtain slowly descends.*

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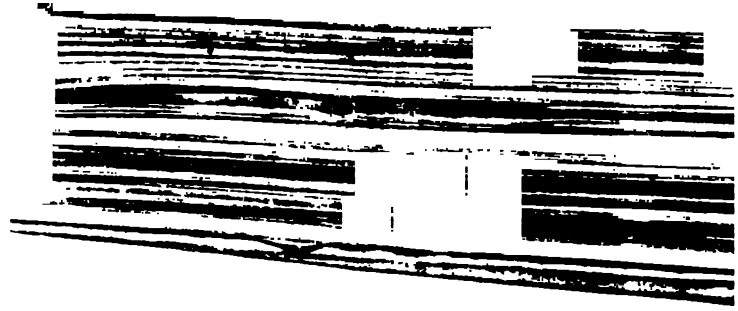




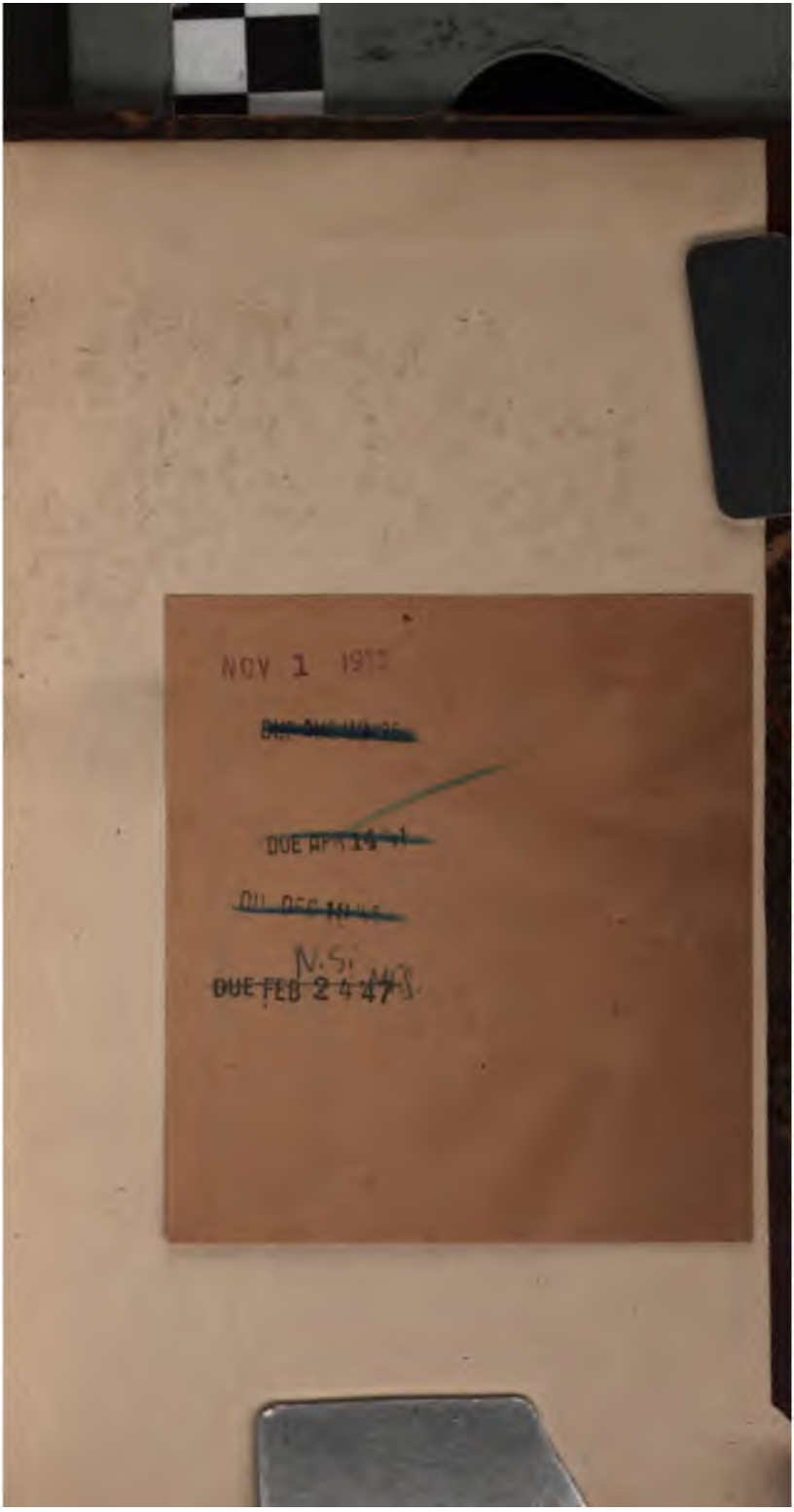











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